

Am. Dec. 1798
The World to Come

OR,
DISCOURSES
ON THE
JOYS or SORROWS
OF
DEPARTED SOULS at DEATH,
AND THE
Glory or Terror of the RESURRECTION.
VOL. II.

Wherein, after some Representations of the
Happiness of HEAVEN, and a Preparation for
it, there follows a Rational and Scriptural
Account of the Punishments in HELL, and a
Proof of their Eternal Duration.

With a plain ANSWER to all the most plausible
OBJECTIONS.

By *I. WATTS*, D. D.

L O N D O N :

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M.DCC.XLV.

DISCOURSES ON THE JOYS OF HEAVEN

I have the first Volume of these Discourses, I made an Introduction to them by an Address to the Reader, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Design of the whole, and of the Method of the first Discourse. The second Volume contains the second Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The third Volume contains the third Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The fourth Volume contains the fourth Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The fifth Volume contains the fifth Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The sixth Volume contains the sixth Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The seventh Volume contains the seventh Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The eighth Volume contains the eighth Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The ninth Volume contains the ninth Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints. The tenth Volume contains the tenth Discourse, in which I have endeavoured to give some Idea of the Nature and Extent of the Joy of Heaven, and of the Manner in which it is communicated to the Saints.



[III]

THE
P R E F A C E.

IN the first Volume of these Discourses I made an Introduction to them, by endeavouring to prove, that at the Departure of the Soul from the Body by Death, the Rewards or Punishments, i. e. the Joys or the Sorrows of the other World are appointed to commence: And I hope I have there given, from the Evidence of Scripture, such Arguments to support this Doctrine, as that the Faith of Christians may not be stagger'd and confounded by different Opinions, or made to wait for these Events, thro' all the many Years that may arise between Death and the Resurrection.

I know nothing besides this that is made a Matter of Controversy in that Volume; and I hope those Sermons, and these that follow, by the Blessing of God, will be made happily useful to Christians, to awaken and warn them against the Danger of being seized by Death in a State unprepared for the Presence of God, and the Happiness of Heaven, and to raise the Comforts and Joys of many pious Souls in the lively Expectation of future Blessedness.

The last Discourses of this second Volume, especially the Eternity of the Punishments of Hell, have been in latter and former Years made a Matter of dispute; and were I to pursue my Enquiries into this Doctrine, only by the Aids of the Light of Nature and Reason, I fear my natural Tenderneſs might warp me aſide from the Rules and the Demands of ſtrict Juſtice, and the wiſe and holy Government of the Great God.

But as I confine myſelf almoſt intirely to the Revelation of Scripture in all my Searches into the Things of revealed Religion and Chriſtianity, I am constrain'd to forget or to lay aſide that Softneſs and Tenderneſs of animal Nature which might lead me aſtray, and to follow the unerring Dictates of the Word of God.

The Scripture frequently, and in the plainſt and ſtrongest manner, aſſerts the everlaſting Punishment of Sinners in Hell; and that by all the Methods of Expreſſion which are uſed in Scripture to ſignify an everlaſting Continuance.

God's utter Hatred and Aversion to Sin, in this perpetual Punishment of it, are manifeſted many ways; (1.) by the juſt and ſevere Threatnings of the wiſe and righteous Governor of the World, which are ſcatter'd up and down in his Word. (2.) By the Veracity of God in his Intimations or Narratives of paſt Events; as Jude v. 7. Sodom and Gomorrah ſuffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire. (3.) By his expreſs Predictions, Matt. xxv. 46.

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THE PREFACE.

These shall go away into everlasting Punishment: *2 Thess. i. 9.* Who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction; and I might add, (4.) by the Veracity and Truth of all his holy Prophets and Apostles, and his Son Jesus Christ at the Head of them, whom he has sent to acquaint Mankind with the Rules of their Duty, and the certain Judgment of God in a holy Correspondence therewith, and that in such Words as seem to admit of no Way of Escape, or of Hope for the condemned Criminals.

I must confess here, if it were possible for the Great and Blessed God any other Way to vindicate his own eternal and unchangeable Hatred of Sin, the inflexible Justice of his Government, the Wisdom of his severe Threatnings, and the Veracity of his Predictions, if it were also possible for him, without this terrible Execution, to vindicate the Veracity, Sincerity and Wisdom of the Prophets and Apostles, and Jesus Christ his Son, the greatest and chiefest of his divine Messengers; and then if the Blessed God should at any time, in a Conscience with his glorious and incomprehensible Perfections, release those wretched Creatures from their acute Pains and long Imprisonment in Hell, either with a Design of the utter Destruction of their Beings by Annihilation, or to put them into some unknown World, upon a new Foot of Trial, I think I ought cheerfully and joyfully to accept
this

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this Appointment of God, for the Good of Millions of my Fellow-Creatures, and add my Joys and Praises to all the Songs and Triumphs of the heavenly World in the Day of such a divine and glorious Release of these Prisoners.

But I feel myself under a Necessity of confessing, that I am utterly unable to solve these Difficulties according to the Discoveries of the New Testament, which must be my constant Rule of Faith, and Hope, and Expectation, with regard to myself and others. I have read the strongest and best Writers on the other Side, yet after all my Studies I have not been able to find any way how these Difficulties may be removed, and how the divine Perfections, and the Conduct of God in his Word, may be fairly vindicated without the Establishment of this Doctrine, as awful and formidable as it is.

The Ways indeed of the Great God and his Thoughts are above our Thoughts and our Ways, as the Heavens are above the Earth; yet I must rest and acquiesce where our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's chief Minister both of his Wrath and his Love, has left me in the divine Revelations of Scripture; and I am constrain'd therefore to leave these unhappy Creatures under the Chains of everlasting Darknes, into which they have cast themselves by their wilful Iniquities, till the Blessed God shall see fit to release them.

This

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This would be indeed such a new, such an astonishing and universal Jubilee, both for Devils and wicked Men, as must fill Heaven, Earth and Hell with Hallelujahs and Joy: In the mean time 'tis my ardent Wish, that this awful Sense of the Terrors of the Almighty, and his everlasting Anger, which the Word of the Great God denounces, may awaken some Souls timely to betink themselves of the dreadful Danger into which they are running, before these Terrors seize them at Death, and begin to be executed upon them without Release and without Hope.

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DISCOURSE VIII.

A Soul prepar'd for Heaven.

2 COR. V. 5.

Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same Thing, is God.

WHEN this Apostle designs to en-
tertain our Hope in the noblest
Manner, and raise our Faith to its
highest Joys, he generally calls our Thoughts
far away from all present and visible Things,
and sends them forward to the great and glo-
rious Day of the Resurrection: He points our
Meditations to take a distant Prospect of the
final and compleat Happiness of the Saints in
Heaven, when their Bodies shall be raised
shining and immortal; whereas it is but sel-
dom that he takes Notice of the Heaven of
separate Souls, or that Part of our future
Happiness which commences at the Hour of
Death. But in this Chapter the holy Wri-
ter seems to keep both these Heavens in his
Eye, and speaks of that Blessedness with
which the Spirits of the Just shall enjoy in
the *Presence of the Lord*, as soon as *they are*
absent from the Body, and yet leads our Souls
onwards also to our last and most perfect State
of Happiness, which is delay'd till our cor-
ruptible

DISC. ruptible Bodies shall be raised from the Dust,
VIII. and Mortality shall be swallowed up in Life.

We know, saith he in the first Verse of this Chapter, we know that as soon as our mortal Tabernacle, in which we now dwell, is dissolved, we have a Building ready for us in the Heavens; i. e. an Investiture in a glorious State of Holiness and Immortality, which waits to receive our Spirits when we drop this dying Flesh; Yet the Felicities of this Paradise, or first Heaven, shall receive an unspeakable Addition and Advancement, when Christ shall come the second Time, with all his Saints, to compleat our Salvation.

But which Heaven soever we arrive at, whether it be this of the separate State, or that when our Bodies shall be restor'd, still we must be wrought up to a proper Fitness for it by God himself; and as the End of this Verse tells us, *he gives us his own Spirit as an Earnest of these future Blessings.*

The Observation which shall be the Subject of my Discourse, is this: *Those who shall enjoy the heavenly Blessedness hereafter, must be prepared for it here in this World, by the Operation of the blessed God.*

Here we must take Notice in the first Place, that since we are sinful and guilty Creatures in ourselves, and have forfeited all our Pretences to the Favour of God and Happiness, we must be restor'd to his Favour, we must have our Sins forgiven, we must be justified
in

in his Sight with an everlasting Righteousness, **DISC.**
 we must be adopted as the Children of God, **VIII.**
 and have a Right and Title given us to the
 heavenly Inheritance, before we can enter
 into it, or possess it; and this Blessing is pro-
 cured for us by the Obedience and Death of
 the Son of God. 'Tis in his Blood that we
 find an Attenuement for our Iniquities, and
 we must be made *Heirs* of Glory, by be-
 coming the adopted Children of God, and so
 we are *Joint-Heirs* with his Son *Jesus*, and
 shall be glorify'd with him, *Rom. viii. 17.*
 And it is by a true and living Faith in the
 Son of God, that we become Partakers of
 this Blessing. God has *set forth* his Son *Jesus*
 as a *Propitiation* for Sinners thro' Faith in his
 Blood, *Rom. iii. 24.* We are justified by Faith
 in his Blood, and have Hope of eternal Life
 thro' him, *Rom. v.* We also receive our Adop-
 tion, and become the Children of God through
 Faith in Christ *Jesus*, *Gal. iii. 26.* and thereby
 we obtain a Title to some Mansion in our
 Father's House in Heaven, since *Jesus* our
 elder Brother, and our Forerunner, is admitted
 into it to take a Place there in our Name.
 This is a very considerable Part of our neces-
 sary Preparation for the heavenly World, that
 we should be Believers in the Son of God,
 and united to him by a living Faith; and
 this Faith also is the Gift of God, *Eph. ii. 8.*
 We are wrought up to it by his Grace.

DISC. But as this does not seem to be the chief
 VIII. Thing designed in the Words of my Text, I
 shall pass it over thus briefly, and apply myself to consider what that further Fitness or Preparation for Heaven intends, for which we are said here *to be wrought up by God himself*. The former Preparation for Heaven, may rather be said to be a *Relative Change*, which is included in our Pardon or Justification, and alters our State from the Condemnation of Hell, to the Favour and Love of God: But this latter Preparation implies a *real Change* of our Nature by sanctifying Grace, and gives us a Temper of Soul suited to the Business and Blessedness of the heavenly World. This is the Preparation which my Text speaks of.

The great Enquiry therefore at present is, *What are those Steps, or gradual Operations, by which the blessed God works us up to this Fitness for Heaven?*

And here I shall not run over all the Parts and Lineaments of the new Creature, which is formed by Regeneration, nor the particular Operations of converting Grace, whereby we are convinced of Sin, and led to Faith and Repentance, and new Obedience, tho' these are all necessary to this End; but I shall confine myself only to those Things which have a more immediate Reference to the heavenly Blessedness, and they are such as follow.

1. *God works us up to a Preparation for the heavenly Felicity, by establishing and confirming*

firming our Belief, that there is a Heaven DISC.
 provided for the Saints, and by giving us some VIII.
 clearer Acquaintance with the Nature, the
 Business, and the Blessedness of this Heaven.
 All this is done by the Gospel of Christ, and
 by the secret Operation of the blessed God,
 teaching us to understand his Gospel.

Alas! how ignorant were the *Heathen* Sages
 about any future State for the Righteous? How
 bewilder'd were the best of them in all
 their Imaginations? How vain were all their
 Reasonings upon this Subject, and how little
 Satisfaction could they give to an honest En-
 quirer, whether there was any Reward pro-
 vided for good Men beyond this Life? The
 Light of Nature was their Guide; and those
 in whom this feeble Taper burnt with the
 fairest Lustre, were still left in great Dark-
 ness about Futurity. As the *Gentile* Philoso-
 phers were left in great Uncertainties whether
 there was any Heaven or no, so were their
 Conceptions of heavenly Things very absurd
 and ridiculous; and their various Fancies
 about the Nature and Enjoyments of it, were
 all Impertinence.

And how little Knowledge had the Pa-
 triarchs themselves, if we may judge of their
 Knowledge by the five Books of *Moses*, which
 give no plain and express Promise of future
 Happiness in another World, neither to *Abel*
 nor *Noah*, to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, or to
Moses himself? And were it not for some Ex-

DISC. preſſions in the New Teſtament, and by
 VIII. that XIth Chapter to the *Hebrews*, where we
 are told, that theſe good Men *ſought a bea-*
venly Country, and hoped for Happineſs in a
 future and inviſible State, we ſhould ſome-
 times be ready to doubt whether they knew
 almoſt any thing of the future Reſurrection
 and Glory.

That great and excellent Man *Job*, had one
 or two lucid Intervals of peculiar Brightneſs,
 which ſhone upon him from Heaven, in the
 miſt of his Diſtreſſes, and raiſed him above
 and beyond the common Level of the Diſ-
 penſation he lived in; yet in the main, when
 he deſcribes the State of the Dead, how de-
 ſolate and doleſome is his Language, and
 what heavy Darkneſs hangs upon his Hope?
 See his Expreſſions, *Job x. 21, 22. Let me*
alone that I may take Comfort a little, before I
go whence I ſhall not return, even to the Land
of Darkneſs, and the Shadow of Death, a Land
of Darkneſs as Darkneſs itſelf, and of the Sha-
dow of Death without any Order, and where
the Light is as Darkneſs. Mark how this
 good Man heaps one *Darkneſs* upon another,
 and makes ſo formidable a Gloom as was
 hardly to be diſpelled by the common Notices
 given to Men in that Age.

And if we look into the *Jewiſh* Writings
 in and after the Days of *Moses*, we find the
 Men of Rightcouſneſs frequently entertained
 with Promiſes of Corn, and Wine, and Oil,
 and

and other Blessings of Sense; and few there **DISC.**
were amongst them who saw clearly, and **VIII.**
firmly believed the heavenly Inheritance thro'
the Types, and Shadows, and Figures of *Ca-*
naan, the Promised Land, which flowed with
Milk and Honey.

'Tis granted there are some Hints and Dis-
coveries of a Blessedness beyond the Grave in
the Writings of *David*, *Isaiab*, *Daniel*, and
some of the Prophets: But the brightest of
these Notices fall far short of what the Gospel
of our Lord *Jesus Christ* has set before us.
The Son of God, who came down from Hea-
ven, where he had lived from before the
Creation of this World, has revealed to us
infinitely more of the invisible State than all
that went before him: He tells us of the
pure in Heart enjoying the Sight of God, and
conversing with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*,
the ancient Saints: He assures us there are
many Mansions in his Father's House, and that
he went to prepare a Place there for his Fol-
lowers. *I tell you*, says he, *John viii. 38.* *I*
tell you the Things which I have seen with my
Father. And when he came again from the
Dead, he made it appear to his Disciples that
he had brought *Life and Immortality to Light*
by his Gospel, *2 Tim. i. 10.*

'Tis only the New Testament that gives us
so bright and satisfactory an Account what
our future Heaven is: The *Righteous shall be*
with God, shall behold him, shall dwell with

DISC. *Christ, and see his Glory; they shall worship*
VIII. *Day and Night in his Temple, and sing the*
 Praises of him that sits upon the Throne, and
 of the Lamb that has redeemed them by his
 Blood; there shall be no Sin, no Sorrow, no
 Death, nor any more Pain, they shall have
 such Satisfaction and Employments as are
 worthy of a rational Nature, and a Soul re-
 fined from Sense and Sin. St. Paul, one of
 his Disciples, was transported into the third
 Heaven before he died, and there learnt un-
 speakable Things, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4. and he, to-
 gether with the other Apostles, have pub-
 lished the Glories of that future World which
 they learnt from Jesus their Lord, and con-
 firmed these Things to our Faith by Prophe-
 cies and Miracles without Number.

Now the blessed God himself prepares his
 own People for this Heaven of Happiness, by
 giving them a full Conviction and Assurance
 of the Truth of all these divine Discoveries;
 he impresses them upon their Heart with
 Power, and makes them attend to those di-
 vine Impressions. Every true Christian has
 learnt to say within himself, "This celestial
 " Blessedness is no Dream, is no painted Vi-
 " sion, no gay Scene of flattering Fancy, nor
 " is it a Matter of doubtful Dispute, or of
 " uncertain Opinion. I am assured of it from
 " the Words of Christ the Son of God, and
 " from his blessed Followers, whom he au-
 " thorized to teach me the Things of a future
 World."

World." He that is taught of God beholds these Glories in the Light of a Divine Faith, which is to him the Substance of Things hoped for, and the Evidence of Things not yet seen, Heb. xi. 1.

DISC.
VIII.

2. God works up the Souls of his People to a Preparation for the heavenly State, by purging them from every Defilement that might unfit them for the Blessedness of Heaven. The Removal of the Guilt of Sin by his pardoning Mercy I have mentioned before, as necessary to our Entrance into the heavenly State; and we must walk through this World, this defiling World, with all holy Watchfulness, lest our Soul be blemished with new Pollutions, lest new Guilt come upon our Consciences, and the Thoughts of Appearance before God be terrible to us. That Soul is very much unfit for an Entrance into the Presence of a holy God, who is ever plunging itself into new Circumstances of Guilt, by a careless and unholy Conversation. To stand upon the Borders of Life, and the very Edge of Eternity, will be dreadful to those who have given themselves a Loose to criminal Pleasures, and indulged their irregular Appetites and Passions.

But 'tis not only a Conscience purged from the Guilt of Sin by the Blood of Christ, but a Soul washed also from the defiling Power and Taint of Sin by the sanctifying Spirit that is necessary to make us meet for the heavenly Inheritance. This is that Purification which

DISC. I now chiefly intend, *Matth. v. 8. Blessed are*
VIII. *the pure in Heart for they shall see God. Na-*
thing that defileth must enter into the City of
God on high, nor whatsoever maketh a Lye or
loveth it, Rev. xxi. 27. No Injustice, no Falso-
hood, no Guile or Deceit, can be admitted
within those Gates: they must be without
Guile both in their Heart and Tongue, if they
will stand before the Throne of God, Rev. xiv. 5.
Sincerity and Truth of Soul, with all the Beau-
ties of an upright Heart and Character, are
necessary to prepare an Inhabitant for that
blest State. There must be no Envy, no
Wrath or Malice, no Revenge, nor any of the
angry Principles that dwell in our Flesh and
Blood, or that inflame and disturb the Mind,
will be found in those Regions of Peace and
Love. There must be no Pride or Ambition,
no Self-Exaltation and Vanity that can dwell
in Heaven, for it cast out the Angels of glo-
rious Degree, when they would exalt them-
selves above their own Station. Pride was the
Condemnation of the Devil, and it must not
dwell in a human Heart that ever hopes for a
heavenly Dwelling-place, 1 Tim. iii. 6. and
Jude ver. 6. There must be no sensual and in-
temperate Creature there, no covetous Selfish-
ness, no irregular Passions, no Narrowness of
Soul, no uncharitable and Party Spirit will ever
be found in that Country of diffusive Love and
Joy.

And

And since the best of Christians have had **DISC.**
 the Seeds of many of these Iniquities in their **VIII.**
 Hearts, and they have made a painful Com-
 plaint of these rising Corruptions of Nature
 upon many Occasions, these Iniquities must
 be mortified and slain by the Work of the
 Spirit of God within us, if ever we ourselves
 would live the Divine Life of Heaven, *Rom.*
viii. 13. There is a great deal of this purify-
 ing Work to be done in the Souls of all of us,
 before we can be prepared for the heavenly
 World; and though we cannot arrive at Per-
 fection here, yet we must be wrought up to a
 Temper in some measure fit to enter into that
 Blessedness: And God is training his People
 up for this Purpose all the Days of their Tra-
 vels through this desert World. Happy Souls,
 who feel themselves more and more released
 from the Bonds of these Iniquities, Day by
 Day, and thereby feel within themselves the
 growing Evidences of a joyful Hope!

3. God does not only purify us from every
 Sin in order to prepare us for Heaven, but *he*
is ever loosening and weaning our Hearts from
all those lawful Things in this Life, which are
not to be enjoy'd in Heaven. Our sensual Ap-
 petites, and our carnal Desires, so far as they
 are natural, though not sinful, must die before
 we can enter into eternal Life. *Flesh and*
Blood cannot inherit that divine, incorruptible,
and refined Happiness. Riches and Treasures
of Gold and Silver which the Rust can corrupt,
and

DISC. *and which Thieves can break through and steal,*
VIII. are not provided for the heavenly State : They
 are all of the earthly kind, and too mean for
 the Relish of a heavenly Spirit. Although a
 Christian may possess many of these Things in
 the present Life, yet his Affections must be
 divested of them, and his Soul divided from
 them, if he would be a Saint indeed, and ever
 ready for the purer Blessings of Paradise. The
 Businesses, the Cares and the Concerns of this
 secular Life, are ready to drink up our Spirits
 too much while we are here ; we are too prone
 to mingle our very Souls with them, and
 thereby grow unfit for heavenly Felicities :
 And therefore 'tis that our Saviour has warned
 us, Luke xxi. 34. *Let not your Hearts be over-*
charged with the Cares of this World, any more
than with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, if you
 would be always ready for your Flight to a
 better State, and meet the Summons of your
 Lord to Paradise.

There are also many curious Speculations
 and delightful Amusements which may law-
 fully entertain us while we are here ; there
 are Sports and Recreations which may divert
 the Flesh or the Mind in a lawful manner,
 whilst we dwell in Tabernacles of Flesh
 and Blood, and are encompassed with mortal
 Things : But the Soul that is wrought for
 Heaven must arise to an holy Indifference to
 all the Entertainments of Flesh and Sense, and
 Time, if it would put on the Appearance of
 an

an heavenly Inhabitant. Christians that would be ever ready for the Glories of a better World must be such in some measure as the Apostle describes, 1 Cor. vii. 29, &c. They must *re-joice with such Moderation in their dearest Com-forts of Life as though they rejoiced not*, they must *weep and mourn for the Loss of them with such a divine Self-Government as though they wept not*, they must *buy as though they possessed not*, they must *use this World as not abusing it in any Instance*, but must look upon the Fashions and the Scenes of it as vanishing Things, and have their Hearts *set on the Things that are above where Christ Jesus is at the Fa-ther's right Hand*, Colos. iii. 1, 2.

If you ask me, what Methods the blessed God uses in order to attain these Ends, and to purify and refine the Soul for Heaven, I an-swer, he sometimes does it by sharp Strokes of Affliction, making our Interests in the Crea-ture bitter to us, that we may be wean'd from the Relish of them, and the Power of Divine Grace, must accompany all his weaning Pro-vidences, or the Work will not be done.

Sometimes again he weans the Soul from the lawful Things of this World, by permit-ting our earthly Enjoyments to plunge us into Difficulties, to seize the Heart with Anxieties, or to surround us with sore Temptations: Then, when we feel ourselves falling into Sin, and bruised or defiled thereby, we lose our former Gust of Pleasure in them; and when
we

DISC. we are recovered by Divine Grace, we are
VIII. more effectually weaned from such kind of
 ~~~~~ Temptations for the future; but 'tis impossible  
 in the Compass of a few Lines to describe the  
 various Methods which the blessed God uses  
 to wean the Spirit from all its earthly Attach-  
 ments, and to work it up to a Meetness for the  
 Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Blessed  
 Souls, who are thus loosened and weaned from  
 sensible Things, though it be done by pain-  
 ful Sufferings!

4. The Great God not only weans our  
 Hearts from those Things that are not to be  
 enjoyed in Heaven, but he gives us a *holy Ap-  
 petite and Relish suited to the Provisions of the  
 heavenly World, and raises our Desires and  
 Tendencies of Soul toward them.* By Nature  
 our Minds are estranged from God, and from  
 all that is divine and holy; we have no De-  
 sires after his Love, nor Delight in the Thoughts  
 of dwelling with God: But when Divine  
 Grace has effectually touched the Heart, it  
 ever tends upwards to that World of Holiness  
 and Peace. So the Needle, when 'tis touched  
 by the Loadstone, ever points to the beloved  
 Pole-star, and seems uneasy when it is diverted  
 from it, nor will it rest till it return thither  
 again.

Do the sweet Sensations of Divine Love  
 make up a great Part of the heavenly Blessed-  
 ness? The Soul is in some measure fitted for  
 it, who can say with *David* in *Psal. iv. 6.*

*Lord,*



*Lord, lift thou up upon me the Light of thy DISC  
Countenance, and I shall rejoice my Heart more WILL  
than if Corn, and Wine, and Oil abounded; and  
all earthly Blessings were multiplied upon me;  
for in thy Love is the Life of my Soul, and  
thy Loving-kindness is better than Life,  
Psalm lxxiii.*

*Is the felicitating Presence of God to be in-  
joyed in the future World, and shall we see  
his Face there with unspeakable Delight?  
Then those Souls are prepar'd for Heaven;  
who can say with the Psalmist, Psalm xlii. 2.  
When shall I come and appear before God?  
When shall I have finished my Travels thro'  
this Wilderness, that I may arrive at my Fa-  
ther's House? This one thing have I desired,  
that I may dwell in the House of God for ever  
to behold the Beauty of the Lord there, Psalm xxvii.  
4. 'Tis enough for me that I shall behold thy  
Face in Righteousness, and I shall be satisfied  
when I awake out of the Dust with thy Like-  
ness. With my Soul have I desired thee, O  
Lord, in the Night, in the Darknes of this  
desart World I have longed for the Light of  
thy Face, and with my Spirit within me I will  
seek thee early. Whom have I in Heaven but  
thee; neither is there any on Earth that I desire  
beside thee, Psalm xvii. Isai. xxvi. Psalm lxxiii. O  
when shall the Day come when there shall be  
no more Distance and Estrangement of my  
Heart from God, but I shall feel all my Powers  
for ever near him?*

**DISC.** Is the sweet Society of Jesus to be enjoyed  
**VIII.** in the heavenly Region, then those are prepared for this Happiness who feel in themselves a Desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better than the most pleasurable Scenes on Earth, *Phil. i. 23. I am willing and rejoice in the Thought of it rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 8.* I behold in the Light of Faith the dawning Glory of that Day, when Jesus shall return from Heaven, when he shall revisit this wretched World, and put an End to these wretched Scenes of Vanity. Behold he cometh in the Clouds, and every Eye shall see him. He comes into our World to them that look for him, not to be made a Sacrifice for Sin, but to compleat our Salvation. I long to behold him, and I love the Thought of his Appearance, *Rev. i. Heb. ix. 2 Tim. iv. &c.*

Is there not only a Freedom from Pain and Sorrow among the Saints on high, but is there also an eternal Release from all the Bonds of Sin and Temptation? Then that Soul discovers a Degree of Preparation for it, who can say with an holy Groan and Grief of Heart, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death? Rom. vii.* In this Tabernacle we groan indeed being burdened, and are desirous rather to be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven, with our holy State of Immortality, *2 Cor. v. 4.* That God who has wrought these divine  
 Breath-

Breathings in the Soul will one Day fulfil them **DISC.**  
 all, and he is working up the Christian to a **VIII.**  
 blessed Meekness for this Felicity by awaken-  
 ing these Wishes in the very Centre of the  
 Heart. Happy Heart, which feels these holy  
 Aspirations, these divine Breathings!

5. The blessed God is pleased to work us  
 up to a Preparation for the heavenly World by  
*forming the Temper of our Minds into a Like-*  
*ness to the Inhabitants of Heaven,* i. e. to God  
 himself, to *Christ Jesus* the Son of God, to  
 Angels and Saints, to the Spirits of the just  
 made perfect. From the Children of Folly  
 and Sin we must be transformed into the Chil-  
 dren of God, we must be created anew after  
 his Image, and resemble our heavenly Father,  
 that we may be capable of enjoying his Love,  
 and rejoicing in his Presence. We must be  
 conformable to the Image of his only begot-  
 ten Son *Christ Jesus*, and walk and live as he  
 did in this World, that we may be prepared  
 to dwell with him in the World to come,  
*Rom. viii. 29. 1 John iv. 17.* We must have  
 the same Temper and Spirit of Holiness  
 wrought in us, that we may be Imitators of  
 all the holy ones that dwell in Heaven, and  
 that we may be Followers of the Saints who  
 have been Strangers and Travellers in this  
 World in all former Ages.

How can we hope to have free Conversa-  
 tion with glorious Beings, which are so unlike  
 to ourselves, as God, and Christ, and Angels,



**Disc.** are unlike to the sinful Children of Men?  
**VIII.** How can we imagine ourselves to be fit Company for such pure and perfect Beings, beautiful, and shining in Holiness, while we are defiled with the Iniquities of our Natures, and ever falling into new Guilt and Pollution? Happy Souls, who can say thro' Grace, I have *walked in the Light as God is in the Light*, and I trust, O Father, I shall dwell for ever with thee there. I have been a Follower of the Lamb through the thorny and rugged Passages of this Wilderness, and I humbly hope I shall set with thee, O *Jesus*, upon a Throne, glorious and holy. I have been a Companion of them who have finished the Christian Race, who have fought the good Fight, and obtained the Victory, and I trust I shall have a Name and a Place amongst all you holy ones who have fought and overcome. O for a Heart and Tongue furnished for such Appeals to all the blessed Inhabitants of Paradise, the Possessors of those Mansions on high!

6. The Grace of God works us up to a Preparation for Heaven by *carrying us thro' those Trials and Sufferings, those Labours and Conflicts here in this Life, which will not only make Heaven the sweeter to us, but will make it more honourable for God himself to bestow this Heaven upon us.*

When the Spirits of a Creature are almost worn out with the toilsome Labours of the Day, what an additional Sweetness does he find

find in Rest and Repose? What an inward **DISC.**  
Relish and Satisfaction to the Soul, that has **VIII.**  
been fatigued under a long and tedious War  
with Sins and Temptations, to be transported  
to such a Place where Sin cannot follow them,  
and Temptation can never reach them? How  
will it enhance all the Felicities of the heavenly  
World when we enter into it, to feel ourselves  
released from all the Trials and Distresses and  
Sufferings which we have sustained in our  
Travels thitherwards? The Review of the  
Waves and the Storms wherein we had been  
tossed for a long Season, and had been almost  
shipwreck'd there, will make the peaceful  
Haven of Eternity, to which we shall arrive  
much more agreeable to every one of the Suf-  
ferers, *2 Cor. iv. 17. Our light Afflictions,*  
*which are but for a Moment, are in this Way*  
*working for us a far more exceeding and eternal*  
*Weight of Glory, and preparing us for the Pos-*  
*session of it.*

But it should be added also, that the Prize  
of Life, and the Crown of Glory, is much  
more honourably bestowed on those who have  
been long fighting, running, and labouring to  
obtain it. Heaven will appear as a condecent  
Reward of all the faithful Servants of God upon  
Earth, and a divine Recompence of their La-  
bours and Sufferings, *2 Thes. i. 6. As it is a*  
*righteous Thing with God to recompense Tribu-*  
*lation to them that trouble you, so to give to*  
*those who are troubled Rest and Salvation.*

**DISC.** This is that equitable or condecent Fitness that  
**VIII.** God, as Governor of the World, has wisely  
 appointed and made necessary before our Entrance into Heaven. *Christ* himself our Fore-runner, and the *Captain of our Salvation*, was made perfect thro' *Sufferings*, and was train'd up for his Throne on high by enduring the Contradiction of Sinners, and the Variety of Agonies which attended his Life and Death in this lower World, this Stage of Conflict and Sufferings. See *Heb. ii. 10.* and *xii. 1.*

Though we cannot pretend by our Labours in the Race to have merited the Prize, yet we must labour through the Race before we receive it. Our Conflicts cannot pretend to have deserved the Crown which is promised, but we must fight the Battles of the Lord before we obtain it. This was *St. Paul's* Encouragement and Hope, *2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.* *I have fought the good fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge will give me, and not to me only, but to all those who love his Appearance.* There is a great deal of divine Wisdom in this Appointment, that the Children of God may be counted in this Sense worthy of his Kingdom for which they also suffer, *2 Thes. i. 5:* and that the Relish of those Satisfaction may be doubled to all the Sufferers.

7. God yet further prepares and works up his People for Heaven by teaching them some  
 of



*of the Employments of the heavenly World, and* **DISC.**  
*initiating and inuring them to the Practice* **VIII.**  
*thereof. Is the Contemplation of the blessed God*  
in his Nature and his various Perfections the  
Business of glorified Souls? God teaches his  
Children, whom he is training up for Glory,  
to practise this holy Contemplation: He fixes  
their Thoughts upon the Wonders of his Na-  
ture and his Grace, his Works of Creation  
and Providence, the Blessings of his redeem-  
ing Love by his Son *Jesus*, and the Terrors  
of his Justice which shall be executed by the  
same Hand, while the Soul at the same Time  
can appeal to God with holy Delight, *My*  
*Meditation of thee shall be sweet indeed, O may*  
*I dwell for ever in the midst of thy Light, and*  
*see all thy wondrous Glories diffused around*  
*me, and make my Joys everlasting!*

Are we told that Heaven consists also in  
*beholding the Glory of Christ*, John xvii. 24.  
And how happily does God prepare his Saints  
for this Part of Heaven, by filling their  
Thoughts with the various Graces and Ho-  
nours of *Jesus* the Saviour? And when they  
are in their lonely Retirements, they trace the  
Footsteps of their Beloved through all his La-  
bours and Sorrows in this mortal State, even  
from his Cradle to his Cross; they follow him  
in their holy Meditations to his Agonies in the  
Garden, to his Anguish of Soul there; thro'  
all his Sufferings in Death, thro' the Grave  
his Bed of Darkness, and trace him on still to  
his

**DISC.** his glorious Resurrection, and to his Ascent  
**VIII.** to his Father's House, when a bright Cloud  
 like a Chariot bore him up to Heaven with  
 attending Angels: *This is my Beloved*, says the  
 Soul, and *this is my Friend*, whom I shall see  
 with Joy in the upper World: He is altogether  
 lovely, and he demands my highest  
 Love.

Is it part of the Happiness of Heaven to  
*converse with the blessed God by holy Addresses*  
*of Acknowledgments and Praise*, as it is de-  
 scribed in Rev. iv. and v. and vii. They are  
*before the Throne of God Day and Night*, and  
*serve him in his Temple*, and join with holy  
 Joy to pronounce that Divine Song, *Blessing*  
*and Honour, and Glory and Power, be to him*  
*that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for*  
*ever and ever: Worthy art thou, O Lord, to*  
*receive Glory and Honour, for thou hast created*  
*all things for thy Pleasure: Worthy is the*  
*Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and*  
*Riches, and Strength, Glory and Blessing, for*  
*thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God*  
*by thy Blood out of every Kindred and Nation.*  
 Now 'tis evident that those whose Hearts and  
 Lips are joyfully fitted to pronounce this holy  
 Song, and to join in this Harmony, is fitted  
 also for these blessed Employments of the hea-  
 venly State: And yet at the same time they  
 abase themselves in the Dust of Humility, and  
 with the living Creatures or Angels they fall  
 down before the Throne, and with the Elders  
 they

they cast down their Crowns at his Foot, they DISC-  
confess themselves the Sons of Earth and Dust, VIII.  
and would appear as nothing while God is all, ~~~~~  
*Rev. iv. 9, 10. and v. 8.*

Are all the Powers of glorified Nature in Heaven active in the unknown Services of God and *Christ* there? So the Saints are train'd up for this Service and this Activity here on Earth, by Diligence and Delight in their less noble Employments, the inferior Labours and Duties that Providence demands of them here, whereby they are prepar'd for more glorious Employment on high; for Heaven is no idle or unactive State.

Do some of the Satisfactions of the heavenly World arise from the *sweet Society of the Blessed above, their fervent Love to each other, their mutual Delight in holy Converse, the Joy that arises in the Heart of each upon a Survey of the Happiness of all the holy and blessed Inhabitants? Does Benevolence and Goodness of every kind overflow in the heavenly World?* 'Tis plain that God is training up his own Children for this Blessedness, by employing them in this manner while they are here below: He is in some Measure fitted for this Heaven, who can say, *the Saints are the Excellent of the Earth, in whom is all my Delight*: I love them from my Soul, because they love my God and my Saviour. I see the Image of the Father, and of *Jesus* his Son in them, and I cannot but love that Image wheresoever I behold it. I feel myself



**DISC.** myself ready to rejoice when my Fellow Chris-  
**VIII.** tians partake of Joy, and I long for that Tem-  
 per of Mind when I shall delight myself in the  
 Felicity of all my Fellow Saints in Perfection,  
 and shall make their Heaven a Part of my  
 own. But I proceed not here, because this  
 would anticipate what I design hereafter.

3. God is pleased to work up his People to  
 a Preparation for the heavenly State, by giving  
 them a Pledge and Earnest of the Blessedness of  
 Heaven, that is, by sending his own Spirit into  
 their Hearts under this very Character, both  
 as the Spring of a divine Life, and as the Evi-  
 dence of our Hope, and sometimes bestowing  
 upon them such *Forecasts of the heavenly World*,  
 by the Operations of his holy Spirit, which are  
 too joyful and glorious to be fully expressed in  
 mortal Language; but we shall attempt some-  
 thing of it in another Discourse.

I proceed now to seek what *Inferences* or  
 edifying *Remarks* may be made upon our Me-  
 ditations thus far.

*Rem. 1.* We learn from my Text *what are*  
*the brightest, the plainest, and the surest Evi-*  
*dences of our Interest in the heavenly Blessedness;*  
*are we train'd up to it, and prepar'd for it?*  
 Has the blessed God wrought up our Souls to  
 any hopeful Degrees of this Preparation? Has  
 he in any measure made us meet for this In-  
 heritance of the Saints in Light?

I grant the Scripture teaches us, that this is by  
 a true and living Faith in our Lord Jesus  
 Christ,

*Christ*, that we obtain a Title to eternal Life. **DISC.** according to the Proposals of the Covenant of **VIII.** Grace in the Gospel, that our Preparation for Heaven by a holy and heavenly Temper of Mind and Conduct of Life, is the first and most uncontested Evidence of the Truth and Life of our Faith, and such a Proof of it as will stand the Test both in Life and Death, in this World, and in the World to come. If we would manifest our Faith in *Christ* to be sincere and genuine and effectual for our Salvation, we must make it appear that we are growing up into the Image of *Christ* in All things, we must be formed after the Likeness of the Son of God, who is our great Example, and our Fore-runner into Heaven, and where this Evidence is found the Soul cannot fail of Salvation. Whereforever there is this Finesse for the Joys on high, God will assuredly bestow these Divine Pleasures. It is for such Souls that he has prepar'd a Heaven, and when he has prepar'd such Souls for the heavenly World, he will surely bring them to the Possession of it.

Of how great Moment and Importance is it then for each of us to chastise ourselves with watchful Diligence and Sincerity, whether we are in any measure fitted for the Blessedness above. And to this End we may run over in our Enquiries all the former Steps of Preparation.

Let

**DISC.** Let us enquire of our Souls then, am I so  
**VIII.** fully persuaded of this State of future Happiness, as to resolve, This shall be my Aim, this my everlasting Pursuit? Have we seen this Blessedness in the various Representations of it in the Word of God, as the most amiable and desirable Thing, and have we set our Faces to travel thither with an holy Purpose and Determination, through Grace, never to tire or grow weary till we arrive at the Enjoyment of it? Have we fixed our Hope and Expectation upon the blessed Promises in the Word, and are we by these Promises endeavouring daily to cleanse ourselves from all Defilements of Flesh and Spirit, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God? Do we obtain any Victories over our spiritual Enemies, and maintain our pious Conflicts against all the Oppositions which we meet with in our Way? Do we labour to suppress every rising Ferment of Envy, Pride, Wrath, Sensuality, and those corrupt Appetites and Passions which render us unfit for that holy and heavenly World? Are our Hearts daily more mortify'd to the Things of this World, the Enjoyments of Flesh and Sense, which are not to be found in Heaven? Are our Hearts more weaned from the sensual Satisfactions and intemperate Delights of the animal Life? Are we dead to the Temptations of Gold and Silver, the Grandeurs and the Gaieties, and Splendors of this present low Life of Flesh and



and Blood, which are no Part nor Portion of **DISC.**  
the heavenly Felicity? Do we view the tempt- **VIII.**  
ing Things of this World with an holy Indif-  
ference, and possess and use them with Affec-  
tions so calm and so cool, as becomes a Rank  
of Beings that have a nobler, a richer, and a  
more exalted Hope? Have we found the La-  
bours and Burdens, the Sorrows and Afflic-  
tions of the present State, happy Instruments  
to prepare us for the Blessedness above, by  
curing all our vain and carnal Desires? Are  
we in any measure Imitators of those who  
have gone before us thro' *Faith and Patience*,  
and are made Possessors of the promised Joy?  
Are we *Followers of God as dear Children*?  
Have we the Image of our heavenly Father  
created anew in us, and do we walk as our  
Lord *Jesus Christ* also walked, while he was  
in this Wilderness travelling to his Father's  
House? Are our earnest Desires towards this  
sort of Felicity excited and raised high? Have  
we a strong Tendency of Soul to the holy  
Enjoyments of the upper World? Do we sigh  
and groan after a compleat Freedom from Sin,  
and a Deliverance from every Temptation?  
Do we employ ourselves with Pleasure in the  
Work and Business of Heaven, in the holy  
Contemplation of God, in a delightful Survey  
of the Person and Offices of his Son *Jesus*,  
his wondrous Condescension, and his ama-  
zing Compassion? Do we take Pleasure in  
conversing with God our Father by holy Ad-  
dresses

**DISC.** dresses of Praise and Thankfulness? Do we  
**VIII** love all the Saints, and delight in their So-  
 ciety, and do we rejoice to spend our Time  
 with them in heavenly Conversation, though  
 they may be amongst the lower Ranks of  
 Life here on Earth? And do we diffuse our  
 Love thro' all who wear the Image of God,  
 and take a pleasing Satisfaction of Soul in  
 their Increase in Holiness, and rejoice in their  
 Joys?

If God has thus fitted thee, O Christian,  
 in this Manner for the Mansions of the happy  
 World, then surely he has set thee apart for  
 himself, he has begun eternal Life in thee,  
 the Dawn of eternal Glory is risen upon thee,  
 and he will bring thee into the compleat  
 Noon of Blessedness, into the overflowing  
 Light of divine Beatitudes. *Arise and shine,*  
 O Christian, for thy Life is come, *the Glory*  
*of the Lord is risen upon thee*; thou hast no  
 need to ascend into Heaven to search for thy  
 Evidences among the Decrees of God, and to  
 pry into the Rolls of Electing Grace, for if  
 thou hast been transformed into an heavenly  
 Temper, thy Name is surely written in the  
 Lamb's Book of Life; Heaven is begun with-  
 in thee, and God will fulfil his own Work.

*Rom. 2. What a solid Comfort is it to poor,*  
*mourning, troubled, afflicted Souls under all*  
*their Sorrows, their Frailties, their Tempta-*  
*tions, and Infirmities here on Earth, that they*  
*have a clear Evidence of Heaven within them.*

This

This is such a Peace as Jesus Christ left to **DISC**  
his Disciples by Legacy, *John xiv. 27.* Such **VIII.**  
as the World cannot give, and such as the  
World cannot take away.

This is a Spring of constant and divine  
Consolation to those who seem to be worn  
out with old Age or Infirmities of Nature,  
and they complain they are fit for no Service  
in this World; but if they can feel in them-  
selves this holy Fitness for the Enjoyments of  
Heaven, they have a rich and living Poun-  
tain of Pleasure in their own Breasts, ever  
springing, ever flowing, and such as will fol-  
low them with daily Supplies of Pleasure, if  
they are not wanting to themselves, thro' all  
this Wilderness, till they arrive at that Land  
where all the Rivers of Blessing meet and  
join in a full Stream, to make the Inhabitants  
for ever happy.

It may be, O Christian, thou art afraid  
that thou hast felt but little of this divine  
Preparation; thou seest so many Defects in  
thyself daily, so much Unlikeness to God, so  
much Working of Iniquity, such restless Ef-  
forts of the Body of Sin, so much Prevalence  
of Temptation, so much Coldness in Duty,  
such Deadness in Acts of Devotion, such fre-  
quent Returns of Guilt and Pain in a tender  
Conscience, and so many Enemies to struggle  
with every Step of thy Way to Heaven, that  
thou art greatly discouraged and afraid this  
divine Preparation is not wrought in thee.

am E

Enquire



**DISC.** Enquire then yet farther, Are all these melancholy Scenes both within and without, the **VIII.** Matter of thy sincere Grief and Burden? Canst thou say in this Tabernacle, I groan, being burden'd with the Body of Sin, as well as with the Frailties and Pains of Nature? Canst thou say sincerely, that thy inmost Desires are towards God and his Glory in the present Life, and towards his Enjoyment in the Life to come? Dost thou maintain a constant Converse with Heaven as well as thou canst, tho' it be so much broken, and so often painfully interrupted? Hast thou a continual and settled Averſion and Hatred to Sin, and a holy Jealouſy and Fear of its Deſilements? Hast thou a restless Breathing of Soul after greater Likeneſs to God, and greater Communion with him? Dost thou delight in ſpiritual and holy Converſation; and doeſt thy Zeal for the Honour of God and his Son *Jeſus*, carry thee forth to thoſe Actions which are ſuitable to thy Station, for the Advancement of Religion in the World? Be aſſured then that God is training thee up for this heavenly State, and has in ſome meaſure prepared thee for it. God has begun in thee the Buſineſs and Bleſſedneſs of the upper World. In the miſt of all thy Sorrows and Complaints here below, Peace be with thee, and Joy in the Lord, for thy Salvation and thy Felicity ſhall be compleated.

Rem.

Rem. 3. *How vain, and idle, and unreason- DISCI*  
*nable are all the Hopes of Sinners, that they VIII.*  
*shall ever arrive at Heaven without any Pre-*

*paration for it here? There is nothing divine and holy begun in them in this World; and yet they hope to be made happy in the World that is to come; there is nothing of true Grace wrought in their Hearts here; and yet they vainly expect to be made perfect in Pleasure and Glory hereafter.*

25 Think with thyself, O carnal Creature, that Heaven will be a Burden to thee; the Powers, the Appetites, and Passions of thy sinful Nature, will not suffer thee to relish the Joys of the heavenly State. Dost thou imagine that a Worm or Serpent of the Earth, or a Swine which is ever tumbling in the Mire, can be entertained with the golden Ornaments and Splendors of a Palace? Or will the stupid Ass be delighted with the Harmony of a Harp or Viol? No more can a Soul of a carnal and sensual Taste, and which is ever seeking and groveling after earthly Gratifications, be pleased or gratify'd with the refin'd Enjoyments of the heavenly World. Thou must have a new Nature, new Appetites and Affections, ere thou canst partake of divine Joys, or relish them if thou wert placed in the midst of them. Holy Adoration of God, and humble Converse with him in Worship, Converse with the Saints about divine Things, perfect Purity and

**DISC**and Devotion, with the Meditation of the  
**VIII** Excellencies of Christ, and the Sight of him  
 in his Ordinances, have never yet been the  
 Object of thy Delight or Joy; nay, they have  
 rather been thine Aversion; and shouldst thou  
 have the Gates of Heaven open before thee,  
 and see what Business the holy Souls there  
 are employ'd in, thou wouldst find no Desire  
 to such sort of Satisfaction; the Place and  
 the Company would be thy Burden, if thou  
 couldst be let at once into the midst of them.

Think again, O sinful Wretch, thy Car-  
 nality of Soul, thy supreme Love of sensual  
 and brutal Joys, the secret Malice or Envy,  
 the Pride and Impiety of thy Heart, have  
 prepar'd thee for another sort of Company;  
 thou art fitted for Hell by the very Temper  
 of thy Spirit, for such are the Inhabitants of  
 that miserable World, and in thy present State  
 there can be no Admission for thee into Hea-  
 ven. Thou hast treasured up Food for the  
 Worm that never dies, for the eternal Anguish  
 of Conscience; thou hast made thyself fit  
 Fuel by Indulgence of thy sinful and rebel-  
 lious Appetites and Passions, for the fiery In-  
 dignation of God; and every Day thou per-  
 sistest in this State, thy Preparation for the  
 dark Regions of Sin and Sorrow is increased.  
 But this leads me to the last Remark.

Rem. 4. *How dangerous a Thing it is for  
 a Sinner to continue a Day longer in a State  
 so unprepared for the heavenly World. Dost  
 thou*



thou not know, whilst we are Inhabitants **DISC**  
in these Regions of Mortality, we are Borderers **VIII**  
upon Death; and if we are unpre-  
pared for Heaven, we are Borderers upon  
Damnation and Hell? Our Life is but a  
Vapour, and the next Puff may blow us  
away into the Regions of everlasting Dark-  
ness, Misery, and Despair.

Alas! how much of this divine Prepara-  
tion do the best of Saints stand in need of  
for an immediate Entrance into Heaven?  
What Care do they take, how constant  
are their Labours, and how fervent their  
Prayers to increase in this divine Fitness, in  
these holy and heavenly Qualifications! and  
dost thou vainly imagine to exchange Earth  
for Heaven at once, and to be received into  
the pure and holy Mansions of Paradise,  
without any Conformity to God or Christ,  
or the rest of the Inhabitants of that World?

*Objection.* But some idle and slothful  
Creatures will be ready to object and say,  
If it be God who creates his People a new,  
according to his own Image, and fits them  
for Heaven; if we must be wrought up by  
his Power and Grace for the Participation  
of this Glory, what can we do towards it  
ourselves? Or why are we charged and ex-  
horted to prepare ourselves for Heaven?  
Since then it is God must do this Work,  
why may we not lie still, and wait till his  
Grace shall prepare us?

**DISC.** I answer, No, by no means; for God is  
**VIII.** wont to exert his Grace only while Creatures  
 are in the use of his Appointments, and fulfil their Duty. This Language therefore, and these Excuses, seem to be the mere Cavils of a carnal Mind, or the Voice of Sloth and Indolence. Those who have no Inclination to prepare themselves for the Joye of the heavenly State, may wait and expect divine Influences in vain, if they will never stir up themselves to practise what is in their own Power, and to attempt what the Gospel of Grace demands.

In almost all the Transactions of God with Men, it is the Way of his Wisdom to join our Diligence and his Grace together; and there are many Scriptures that give us sufficient Notice of this. See how *St. Paul* argues with the *Philippians*, and stirs them up to Zeal and Activity in securing their own Salvation by the Hope of divine Assurances: *Phil. ii. 12, 13. Work out your own Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.* So said *David* to his Son *Solomon*, when he appointed him to build the Temple of the Lord, *1 Chron. xxviii. 20. Be strong and of good Courage, and do it, for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee, and will not fail thee nor forsake thee, till thou hast finished all the Work.* This was the Charge also that God gave to his People *Israel*, *Lev. xx. 7. Sanctify*

*tify yourselves, and be ye holy, keep my Statutes; I am the Lord who sanctifieth you.* **DISC. VIII.**

So the Psalmist tells us, *Psal. iv. 3. The Lord hath set apart, or separated him who is godly for himself;* and yet, *2 Cor. vi. 17. The Lord commands his People to separate themselves unto him, to come out from amongst the Sinners of this World; and he you separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you.* So in other Places of Scripture, divine Wisdom commands Sinners to fulfil their Duty, *Prov. i. 23. Turn ye at my Reproof:* And yet in the 80th Psalm, the Church prays, *Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be saved.* The Case is very much the same even in the Things that relate to this Life, wherein divine Assistance and Blessing are connected with our Diligence in Duty. Solomon tells us, *Prov. x. 4. The Hand of the Diligent maketh rich;* and yet *ver. 22. It is the Blessing of the Lord that maketh rich also.* We can never expect the Favours of Heaven, unless we are zealous to obey the Commands of Heaven.

When the sinful Children of Men are found waiting on God in his own appointed Ordinances, then they are in the fairest way to receive divine Communications, and be transformed into Saints. If the blind Man had not obey'd the Voice of *Christ*, *John ix. 7. and washed himself in the Pool of Siloam,* he could not expect to have received his



**DISC.** Eye-sight. If the Man with the withered  
**VIII.** Hand, *Matth. xii. 10, 13.* had not used his  
 own Endeavours to *stretch forth his Hand*  
 at the Command of *Christ*, I can hardly  
 believe it would have been restored to its  
 ancient Vigor and Usefulness. If the poor  
*impotent* Creature had not been waiting at the  
 Side of the *Pool in Bethesda*, *John v.* he  
 had not met with the blessed *Jesus*, nor  
 been healed by his miraculous Power. You  
 will say, perhaps, that our blessed Saviour  
 could have visited him in his own House,  
 could have directed his Journey towards his  
 Habitation, or have sent for him into the  
 Publick, and healed him there. No; our  
 Lord did not chuse either of these Ways;  
 but while the Man was waiting at the Pool,  
 where he had Encouragement to hope for a  
 Cure, there the Lord found him, and healed  
 him.

Let not any presuming Sinner therefore,  
 who is sensible of his own Unfitness for  
 Heaven, dare to continue in a careless Indif-  
 ference about so important a Concern: Let  
 him not put off his own Conscience with  
 this foolish Excuse, *It is God must do all in*  
*us and for us, and therefore I will do nothing*  
*myself.* Dost thou think, O Soul, that this  
 will be a sufficient Answer to him that shall  
 judge thee in the great and solemn Day?  
 May you not expect to hear the Judge reply  
 terribly to such an Excuse, "You never  
 sought

"sought after this Preparation for Heaven, DISC.  
"and you must be plunged into Hell, for VIII.  
"which your own Rebellion and Slothful-  
"ness hath prepar'd you."

But perhaps you will *object* again, What can so feeble, so sinful a Creature as I am, do towards this divine Work?

I *answer*, Canst thou not separate one Quarter of an Hour daily to think of thy dreadful Circumstances, and thine eternal Danger in a sinful and defiled State of Soul? Think of the Uncertainty of Life, and how sudden thy Summons may be into the eternal and unchangeable State. Survey thyself in thy sinful Condition both of Heart and Life, and see how unfit thou art for the Company of all the holy ones above. Meditate on these thy perilous Circumstances, till thy Heart be deeply affected therewith; fall down before God in humble Acknowledgment of thy former Guilt and Pollutions: Give up thyself to him with holy Solemnity, to have thy Heart turned away from every Sin, and strongly inclined to Holiness and Heaven. Commit thy Soul, guilty and defiled as it is, into the Hands of *Jesus* the Mediator; entrust thy Case with him as an all-sufficient Saviour; entreat that he would cleanse thee from all thy Guilt and Pollution, by the Blood of his Sacrifice, and the Grace of his Spirit; that Blood of Atone-  
ment which has procured for Sinners Par-

**DISC.** don and Peace with God, and those Operations of his Grace which may sanctify thy sinful Nature. Address thyself to the exalted Saviour for healing Influences from his Hand to cure all the Maladies of thy Soul, to form thee after his Image, and to make thee a Son of God. Pray with holy Importunity for this necessary and divine Blessing, wait on God in Secret and in Publick; give him no Rest Night or Day till he has renewed thy Soul, and transformed thee into a new Creature, and given thee a Relish of the heavenly Enjoyments: Dwell at the Throne of Grace till thou feelest thy Heart drawn upward and heavenward, and watch against every thing that would defile thy Soul anew, or make thee unfit to enter into the Company of the Blessed.

Permit me here to dwell a little upon those *Motives* that should awaken thee to bethink thyself ere it be too late, before the Grave has shut its Mouth upon thee, and thou art consign'd to the Place of eternal Misery. Awake, awake, O impenitent Sinners, who are as yet unprepared for the Business and Blessedness of the heavenly State; awake and exert your Souls in warmest Reflections on Matters of infinite Importance.

(1.) Think with yourselves how much the Great God has done towards the Preparation of sinful Men for this Heaven; think seriously of his long-suffering Goodness, and  
his



his sparing Mercy, which should have led you long ago to a melting Sense of your own Folly, and brought you back unto him by humble Repentance. For what Reason were his Patience and his Long-suffering exercised towards you, if not for this very Purpose? *Rom. ii. 4.* Think of the Blessings of Nature with which he has surrounded you, and the Comforts of this Life wherewith he has furnished you, in order to allure your Thoughts towards him, who is the Spring of all Goodness; and to raise your Desires towards him: 'Tis he invites you, who will be the everlasting Portion and Happiness of his People, and in whose Favour consists Life and Felicity; and dare not any longer neglect your Preparation for this Happiness, which consists in the Enjoyment of God, lest you should be cut off before you are prepared.

(2.) Consider again what *Jesus* the Son of God has done and suffer'd, and consider what he is yet doing towards the Preparation of Souls for Heaven: He came down to our World to undertake the glorious and dreadful Work of the Redemption of Sinners from the Curse of the Law and the Terrors of Hell, and to procure a Heaven for every rebellious Creature that would return to God his Father. Think of the Agonies of his Death with which he purchased Mansions of Glory for those that re-

DISC.  
VIII.  


DISC. ceive his Grace in his own appointed Methods, those that are willing to have their Hearts and Minds formed into a suitable Frame to receive this Felicity. Remember that he is risen from the Dead, he is ascended to prepare a Place in Glory for those that are willing to follow him thro' the Paths of Holiness. Harken to the many kind Invitations and Allurements of his Gospel, which calls to the worst of Sinners to return and live, and intreats and exhorts those who are in the Ends of the Earth, and upon the Borders of Hell, *to look unto him that they may be saved*, Isa. xlv. 22. Take heed that you suffer not these Seasons of his inviting Love to slide away and vanish unimproved; take heed how you rebel against the Language of the Grace of his Gospel, and thereby prepare yourselves for double and everlasting Destruction.

(3.) Think again, What blessed Assurances he has proposed to those who are desirous to be trained up for Heaven; how many Thousand Souls, as carnal, as sensual, and as criminal as yours are, have been recovered by the Word of his Gospel, and the Influences of his Spirit, to a new Nature and Life of Holiness? How many are there who from Children of Wrath, have become the Sons and Daughters of the Most High God, Heirs of this Blessedness, and prepared for the Enjoyment of it? O take heed that you

you resist not this Grace, nor rebel against **DISC.**  
 the kind and sacred Motions of the blessed **VIII.**  
 Spirit within you, when his very Office and  
 Business is to change your sinful Natures,  
 and to prepare you for the Regions of eternal  
 Holiness and Peace.

(4.) Think yet further what Advantages  
 you have had from the Weekly Ministrations  
 of the Word of Grace, from reading the  
 Book of God in your own Language, and  
 from the pious Education many of you have  
 enjoyed in the Families from whence you  
 sprung. Think what awakening Hints you  
 have received by the inward Conviction of  
 your own Consciences, and by the Christian  
 Friends you may have conversed with: Have  
 you not been told plainly enough by the  
 Voice of Conscience, that you are now ut-  
 terly unprepar'd for Heaven? Have not pub-  
 lick and private Admonitions given you suf-  
 ficient Warning of the Danger of your pre-  
 sent State? and after all this will you pro-  
 ceed in your own sinful Course till you arrive  
 at the very Gates of Hell and Destruction,  
 till you have prepared yourselves, and made  
 your Souls ripe for the Vengeance of God,  
 and are plunged into it by Death without  
 Remedy or Relief?

(5.) Consider how dreadful will your State  
 be if Death meet you in all your Guilt and  
 Defilements, unwashed, unpardoned, and  
 un sanctify'd,



**DISC.** un sanctify'd, without any Garment of Righteousness, without any Robe of Salvation.

**VIII.**

What a terrible Sentence is that which Death will pronounce upon every such Sinner the Moment that he strikes their Heart! Hear it and tremble, O miserable Creature, hear the formidable and eternal Sentence, *Let him that is unbold be unbold still: Let him that is unprepar'd for Heaven go down to the Regions of Death and Hell, for which his Iniquities have best prepar'd him.*

(6.) Think with yourselves, if you have any thing of Importance to do in this World; or have any momentous Scene of Life to pass through, how diligent are you in Preparation for it. If you are but to visit the Court of a Prince, or go to make your Addresses to any great Man of Honour and Power, or to be admitted into any numerous Society of a superior Character, how diligently do you endeavour to furnish yourselves with such Knowledge of the common Ceremonies of Life, and such Ornaments about your Body as may render you acceptable amongst those whom you are going to converse with: And does not an Entrance into the Court of Heaven, into the Presence of a God of Holiness, and into the Society of pure and blessed Spirits, require some Sollicitude and Care about those Ornaments and Qualifications which are necessary for so solemn and

and glorious an Appearance? If you are designing in this Life to commence any Trade or Business for your Employment and your Support, you are willing to serve an Apprenticeship of seven Years in order to a Preparation for the Exercise of this publick Business; and can you not afford one Day in a Week to learn the Business of Heaven, and to prepare for the Blessedness of it?

DISC.  
VII

And let Parents also consider with themselves what Pains they have taken that their Children may be fit for the Trades and Employments of Life to which they design them, and then let each enquire of their own Consciences, Have I ever done so much to train up my Son for the heavenly World, to fit him for the Appearance before God, and Saints and Angels, and for all the unknown Services of that Celestial Country?

(7.) Go on yet further, O impenitent Sinners, and consider with yourselves what a Blessedness it is to be prepar'd for Heaven; for then you are prepared for Death, and at once you take away all the Terrors of it. O what an unspeakable Happiness is it to pass through this World daily without the Fear of dying? What is it that makes Life so bitter to Multitudes of Souls, and every Malady or Accident so frightful to them, but the perpetual Terrors of Death? Think what a divine Satisfaction it is to walk up and down

in

**DISC.** in this desert Land, ready prepared for an  
**VIII.** Entrance into the Land of Promise, the In-  
 heritance of the Saints in Light: Think of  
 the solid Joy and inward Consolation of those  
 Souls who feel in themselves an habitual Rea-  
 diness for a Departure hence, and who are  
 wrought up by Divine Grace to a Prepara-  
 tion for the Business and the Joys above.  
 Think of the Victory over Death, which is  
 obtained by such a Readiness for Heaven, and  
 how glorious a thing it is to meet that last  
 Enemy the King of Terrors, and encounter  
 him without Fear, and to triumph over him  
 with Divine Language, *O Death, where is  
 thy Sting?* How joyful a Scene would it be  
 to take Leave of all our Friends in this Land  
 of Mortality, with an assured Hope that we  
 are entering into a happier Climate and a  
 better Country, ready prepar'd for all the  
 more glorious Scenes that shall meet us in the  
 invisible World?

'Tis an amazing thing to me, how the  
 Children of Men, who are dying daily off  
 from this Stage of Life, who must all shortly  
 die, and enter into a World of eternal Futu-  
 rity, should be no more concerned about a  
 Preparation for their Departure hence: That  
 they should be so stupidly thoughtless of a  
 World to come, while they are on the very  
 Borders of it, and eternal Joy or eternal Sor-  
 row depends upon this one Question, *Am I  
 prepar'd*



*prepar'd for Heaven or not?* O those two DISC.  
awful Regions of the unseen World; where VIII.  
the Love of God shines with its brightest  
Glories, or where the Vengeance of God is  
discovered in all its Anguish and Horror!  
One of these will be the certain and eternal  
Dwelling-place of the Souls that are prepar'd  
for them, and there must they pass their  
long Immortality, either in Joy, or in Sor-  
row, without a Change; and yet the foolish  
and besotted Tribes of Mankind seem to have  
abandoned all Thought and Concern about  
them. A dangerous Lethargy, or Distraction!

What shall we do to cure Sinners of this  
Madness? Shall I try to rouse these indolent  
unthinking Wretches out of their dangerous  
and mortal Slumbers with the loudest Voice  
of Thunder and Divine Terror? But the Le-  
thargy of Sin is Proof against all these Ter-  
rors and Thunders. Shall I call for a  
Fountain of Tears into my Eyes, and weep  
over them with the tenderest Sympathy and  
Compassion? But they feel not any Meltings  
of Pity for themselves, nor are their Hearts  
to be softened by all our Tears and Wailings.  
Shall I beseech them in the Name of *Christ*  
by the Bowels of his dying Love, and the  
Blood and Anguish of his sufferings for our  
Salvation? But even these divine and astonish-  
ing Instances of Tendernefs and Mercy make  
no Impression on their Souls. While *Satan*  
holds

**DISC.** holds them in his Chains, they are sleeping  
**VIII.** the Sleep of Death. O for a Word of Sovereign and Almighty Grace to reach the Centre of their Spirits! To shake all the Powers of their Nature! To awaken them to behold their eternal Interest! and to prepare for heavenly Felicity. Awake, O Sleepers, ere the Angel of Death seize you, and the Grave shut its Mouth upon you; then all your Seasons and Hopes of Mercy are cut off for ever, and you will awake hopeless Immortals.

I shall conclude this Discourse with one *Word of Exhortation* to those who are in any measure wrought up to a Preparation for the heavenly Blessedness. O happy Creatures! whatsoever Pains you have taken, whatever Conflicts you have endured in the Matter of your own Salvation, yet let God and his Grace have all the Honour of this Work. It is to God you owe your Sacrifices of Praise. *He that hath wrought you up for this Felicity is God.* It was he who awaken'd you first, and set you a thinking of your most important Concerns: It was he that led you first into the Way of Salvation by *Jesus Christ* his Son, and hath thus far crowned your Labours and your Prayers with Success and Blessing. Every Stumbling-block in your Way might have thrown you down to Perdition: Every Temptation might have turned you back from this glorious Pursuit: Every  
 Enemy

Enemy of your Soule might have diseou- **DISC**  
raged or overcome you, if God and his Grace **VIII**  
had not been engaged on your Side.

'Tis he hath upheld you when you were  
falling; he hath taken you by the Hand and  
led you right onward when you were wan-  
dering, and he hath supported you by his  
Divine Cordials of Promise when you were  
fainting. It is God who hath enabled you  
to maintain your Conflict with all the mighty  
Obstacles of your Faith and Hope; it is his  
Grace hath renewed your Nature, hath  
weaned you from this vain flattering World,  
and given you a sacred Relish of Divine  
Blessedness. It is he who hath formed you  
again after his own Image, and hath trained  
you up, and made you meet for the Inheri-  
tance of the Saints in Light. Call up all your  
Powers to praise his Goodness, and say,  
" Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is  
" within me, bless his holy Name: Bless the  
" Lord for ever, and forget not all his Bene-  
" fits. It is God who hath called me out of  
" Darknes into his marvellous Light, and  
" given me to see the Things that belong to  
" my everlasting Peace. It is God who  
" washed away my Iniquities in the Blood  
" of his own Son, and hath renewed me  
" unto Holiness by his blessed Spirit. It is  
" God who hath taken me out of the Fa-  
" mily of Sin and Satan, and given me a  
" Place



**DISC.** "Place among his Children; who hath be-  
**VIII.** "gun to prepare me for the Joys and Bless-  
 "fings of Heaven, and in his own Time he  
 "will fulfil all my Hopes, and compleat  
 "my Felicity." Walk before him with all  
 holy Care and Watchfulness, and take heed  
 that you lose not the Things which you have  
 wrought, nor the Things which God has  
 wrought in you, but that persevering to the  
 End you may receive the full Reward, and  
 obtain the Crown of everlasting Life. *Amen.*

**DIS.**

## DISCOURSE IX.

No Pain among the Blessed.

REV. XXI. 4.

*Neither shall there be any more Pain.*

**T**HERE have been some Divines in DISC.  
 ancient Times, as well as in our pre- IX.  
 sent Age, who suppose this Prophecy re-  
 lates to some glorious and happy Event here  
 on Earth, wherein the Saints and faithful  
 Followers of *Christ* shall be deliver'd from  
 the Bondage and Miseries to which they  
 have been exposed in all former Ages, and  
 shall enjoy the Blessing which these Words  
 promise. Among these Writers some have  
 placed this happy State before the Resurrec-  
 tion of the Body; others make it to belong  
 to that *first Resurrection* which is spoken of  
 in Rev. xx. 6. But let this Prophecy have a  
 particular Aspect upon what *earthly* Period  
 soever, yet all must grant it is certainly true  
 concerning the *heavenly State*; from whose  
 Felicities, taken in the *literal* Sense, these *figu-*  
*rative* Expressions are derived to foretell the  
 Happiness of any Period of the Church in  
 this World; and in this Sense, as *Part of*  
*our Happiness in Heaven*, I shall understand  
 VOL. II. E the

DISC. the Words here, and propose them as the  
IX. Foundation for my present Discourse.

Among the many Things that make this Life uncomfortable, and render Mankind unhappy here below, this is one that has a large Influence, viz. that in this mortal State we are all liable to Pain, from which we shall be perfectly delivered in the Life to come. The Greek Word which is here translated *Pain*, signifies also *Tail* and *Fatigue* and excessive Labour of the Body, as well as *Anguish* and *Vexation* of the Spirit: But since in the two other Places of the New Testament where it is used, the Word most properly signifies the *Pain of the Body*, I presume to understand it chiefly in this Sense also in my Text.

I need not spend Time in explaining what *Pain* is to Persons who dwell in Flesh and Blood: There is not one of you in this Assembly but is better acquainted with the Nature of it by the Sense of *Feeling*, than it is possible for the wisest Philosopher to inform you by all his learned Language. Yet that I may proceed regularly, I would just give you this short Description of it. *Pain is an uneasy Perception of the Soul, occasioned by some Indisposition of the Body to which it is united*; whether this arise from some Disorder or Malady in the Flesh itself, or from some Injury received from without by Wounds, Bruises, or any Thing of the like kind.



kind. Now this Sort of uneasy Sensations **DISC.**  
is not to be found or feared in Heaven. **IX.**

In order to make our present Meditations  
on this Part of the *Blessedness of Heaven*  
useful and joyful to us while we are here  
on Earth, let us enquire,

I. What are the Evils or grand Incon-  
veniencies that generally flow from the Pains  
we suffer here; and as we go we shall sur-  
vey the Satisfaction which arise by our  
Freedom from them all in Heaven.

II. What just and convincing Proofs may  
be given that there are no such uneasy Sen-  
sations to be felt in Heaven, or to be feared  
after this Life.

III. What are the chief Reasons or De-  
signs of the Blessed God in sending Pain on  
his Creatures in this World; and at the  
same Time I shall shew that Pain is banish-  
ed from the heavenly State, because God  
has no such Designs remaining to be accom-  
plished in that World.

IV. What Lessons we may learn from the  
painful Discipline which we feel while we  
are here, in order to shew there is no need  
of such Discipline to teach us those Lessons  
in Heaven, let us address ourselves to make  
these four Inquiries in their Order.

## DISC.

## IX.

## SECTION I.

First. *What are the Evils which flow from Pain, and usually attend it in this Life; and all along as we go we shall take a short View of the heavenly State, where we shall be released from all these Evils and Inconveniencies.*

1. *Pain has a natural Tendency to make the Mind sorrowful as well as the Body uneasy.* Our Souls are so nearly united to Flesh and Blood, that it is not possible for the Mind to possess perfect Happiness and Ease, while the Body is exposed to so many Occasions of Pain. 'Tis granted, that natural Courage and Strength of Heart may prevail in some Persons to bear up their Spirits under long and intense Pains of the Flesh, yet they really take away so much of the Ease and Pleasure of Life, while any of us lie under the acute Sensations of them. Pain will make us confess that we are Flesh and Blood, and force us sometimes to cry out and groan. Even a *Storick* in spite of all the Pride of his Philosophy, will sometimes be forced, by a Sigh or Groan, to confess himself a Man. What are the greatest Part of the Groans and Outcries that are heard all round this our Globe of Earth but the Effects of Pain, either felt or fear'd?

But

But in *Heaven*, where there is no Pain, **DISC.**  
 there shall be no sighing or groaning, nor **IX.**  
 any more crying, as my Text expresses.   
 There shall be nothing to make the Flesh  
 or the Spirit uneasy, and to break the eter-  
 nal Thread of Peace and Pleasure that runs  
 through the whole Duration of the Saints:  
 Not one painful Moment to interrupt the  
 everlasting Felicity of that State. When  
 we have done with Earth and Mortality,  
 we have done also with Sickneſs and An-  
 guish of Nature, and with all Sorrow and  
 Vexation for ever. There are no Groans in  
 the heavenly World to break in upon the  
 Harmony of the Harps and the Songs of  
 the Blessed; no Sighs, no Outcries, no An-  
 guish there to disturb the Muſick and the  
 Joy of the Inhabitants. And though the  
 Soul shall be united to the Body new-raiſed  
 from the Dead, to dwell for ever in Union;  
 yet that new-raiſed Body shall have neither  
 any Springs of Pain in it, nor be capable of  
 giving Anguiſh or Uneaſineſs to the indwel-  
 ling Spirit for ever.

2. Another Evil which attends on Pain  
 is this, that *it ſo indiſpoſes our Nature as often*  
*to unfit us for the Buſineſſes and Duties of the*  
*preſent State.* With how much Coldneſs  
 and Indifferency do we go about our daily  
 Work, and perform it too with many Inter-  
 ruptions, when Nature is burdened with con-  
 tinual Pain, and the vital Springs of Action



DISC. are overborn with perpetual Uneasiness?

IX.  What a Listlessness do we find to many of the Duties of Religion at such a Season, unless it be to run more frequently to the Throne of God, and pour out our Groanings and our Complaints there? Groanings and Cries are the Language of Nature, and the Children of God address themselves in this Language to their heavenly Father: Blessed be the Name of our gracious God, who hears every secret Sigh, who is acquainted with the Sense of every Groan, while we mourn before him, and make our Complaints to him, that we cannot worship him, nor work for him as we would do, because of the Anguish and Maladies of Nature.

And what an Indisposition and Backwardness do we feel in ourselves to fulfil many of the Duties towards our Fellow-Creatures while we ourselves are under present Smart and Anguish? Pain will so sensibly affect *Self* as to draw off all our Thoughts thither, and centre them there, that we cannot so much employ our Cares and our active Powers for the Benefit of our Neighbours: It abates our Concern for our Friends, and while it awakens the Spirit within us into keen Sensations, it takes away the Activity of the Man that feels it from almost all the Services of human Life. When human

man Nature bears so much it can act but little. DISC. IX.

But what a blessed State will that be when we shall never feel this Indisposition to Duties, either human or divine, through any Uneasiness of the Body? When we shall never more be subject to any of these painful Impediments, but for ever cast off all those Clogs and Burdens which fetter the active Powers of the Soul? Then we shall be joyfully employed in such unknown and glorious Services to God our *Father*, and to the Blessed *Jesus*, as require much superior Capacities to what we here possess, and shall find no Weakness, no Weariness, no Pain throughout all the Years of our Immortality, *Rev. vii. 15.* None of the Blessed above are at rest or idle, either *Day or Night*, but they serve him in his Temple, and never cease, and *iv. 8.* No Faintness, no Languors are known there. The *Inhabitants of that Land shall not say, I am sick*: Everlasting Vigour, Chearfulness and Ease shall render every blessed Soul for ever zealous and active in Obedience, as the Angels are in Heaven.

3. *Pain unfits us for the Enjoyments of Life, as well as for the Labours and Duties of it.* It takes away all the pleasing Satisfaction which might attend our Circumstances, and renders the Objects of them insipid and unrelishing. What Pleasure can

DISC. a rich Man take in all the Affluence of  
 IX. earthly Blessings around him, while some  
 { painful Distemper holds him upon the  
 Rack, and distresses him with the Tor-  
 ture? How little Delight can he find in  
 Meats or in Drinks which are prepared for  
 Luxury, when sharp Pain calls all his At-  
 tention to the diseased Part? What Joy can  
 he find in magnificent Buildings, in gay and  
 shining Furniture, in elegant Gardens, or in  
 all the glittering Treasures of the *Indies*,  
 when the Gout torments his Hands and  
 his Feet, or the Rheumatism afflicts his  
 Limbs with intense Anguish? If Pain at-  
 tacks any Part of the Body, and rises to a  
 high Degree, the Luxuries of Life grow  
 tasteless, and Life itself is imbittered to us;  
 Or when Pains less acute are prolonged  
 through Weeks and Months, and perhaps  
 stick in our Flesh all the Night as well as in  
 the Day; how vain and feeble are all the  
 Efforts of the bright and gay Things around  
 us to raise the Soul into Chearfulness? There-  
 fore *Solomon* calls *old Age the Years wherein*  
*there is no Pleasure*, Eccles. xii. 1. Because  
 so many Aches and Ails in that Season pur-  
 sue us in a continual Succession; so many  
 Infirmities and painful Hours attend us usu-  
 ally in that Stage of Life, even in the best Si-  
 tuation that Mortality can boast of, as cuts  
 off and destroys all our Pleasures.

But



But O what a wondrous, what a joyful **DISC.**  
 Change shall that be, when the Soul is com- **IX.**  
 manded to forsake this Flesh and Blood, when it rises as on the Wings of Angels to the heavenly World, and leaves every Pain behind it, together with the Body in the Arms of Death? and what a more illustrious and delightful Change shall we meet in the great-rising Day, when our Bodies shall start up out of the Dust with vigorous Immortality, and without any Spring or Seat of Pain? All the unknown Enjoyments with which Heaven is furnished, shall be taken in by the enlarged Powers of the Soul with intense Pleasure, and not a Moment's Pain shall ever interrupt them.

4. Another Inconvenience and Evil which belongs to Pain is, that *it makes Time and Life itself appear tedious and tiresome, and adds a new Burden to all other Grievances.* Many Evidences of this Truth are scattered throughout all Nature, and on all Sides of this Globe. There is not one Age of Mankind but can furnish us with Millions of Instances. In what melancholy Language does *Job* discover his Sensations of the tiresome Nature of Pain? *I am made to possess Months of Vanity, and wearisome Nights are appointed to me: When I lie down I say, when shall I rise and the Night be gone? And I am full of tossing to and fro unto the Dawning of the Day,* Job vii. 3. When  
 Pain

**DISC.** Pain takes hold of our Flesh it seems to  
**IX.** stretch the Measures of Time to a tedious  
 Length: We cry out as *Moses* expresses it,  
*Deut. xxviii. 67. In the Morning we say,*  
*would to God it were Evening; and at the*  
*Return of the Evening we say again, would*  
*to God it were Morning.*

Long are those Hours indeed, whether  
 of Day-light or Darkness, wherein there is  
 no Relief or Intermision of acute Pain.  
 How tiresome a Thing is it to count the  
 Clock at Midnight in long Successions, and  
 to wait every Hour for the distant Approach  
 of Morning, while our Eyes are unable to  
 close themselves in Slumber, and our An-  
 guish admits not the common Refuge of  
 Sleep. There are Multitudes among the  
 Race of Mortals who have known these  
 Truths by sore Experience. Blessed be God  
 that we do not always feel them!

But when we turn our Thoughts to the  
 heavenly World, where there is no Pain,  
 there we shall find no weary Hours, no te-  
 dious Days, though Eternity with all its  
 unmeasurable Lengths of Duration lies be-  
 fore us. What a dismal Thought is eternal  
 Pain? The very Mention of it makes Na-  
 ture shudder and stand aghast; but Futurity  
 with all its endless Years, in a Land of Peace  
 and Pleasure gives the Soul the most delight-  
 ful Prospect, for there is no Shadow of Un-  
 easiness in that State to render our Abode  
 there

there tiresome, or to think the Ages of it long. DISC IX.

5. Another Evil that belongs to Pain is, that it has an unhappy Tendency to ruffle the Passions, and to render us fretful and peevish within ourselves, as well as towards those who are round about us. Even the kindest

and the tenderest Hand that ministers to our Relief, can hardly secure itself from the peevish Quarrels of a Man in extream Pain.

Not that we are to suppose that this peevish Humour, this Fretfulness of Spirit are thereby made innocent and perfectly excused: No, by no means; but it must be acknowledged still that Continuance in Pain is too ready to work up the Spirit into frequent Disquietude and Eagerness: We are tempted to fret at every thing, we quarrel with every thing, we grow impatient under every Delay, angry with our best Friends, sharp and sudden in our Resentments, with wrathful Speeches breaking out of our Lips.

This peevish Humour in a Day of Pain is so common a Fault, that I fear 'tis too much excused and indulged. Let me rather say with myself, "My God is now putting me to the Trial what sort of Christian I am, and how much I have learnt of Self-government, and through his Grace I will subdue my uneasy Passions, though I cannot relieve my Pain." O'tis a noble Point of Honour gained in a sick chamber,

or



DISC. or on a Bed of Anguish, to lie press'd with  
 IX. extream Pain, and yet maintain a Serenity  
 and Calmness of Soul; to be all Meekness  
 and Gentleness and Patience among our  
 Friends or Attendants, under the sharp  
 Twinges of it; to utter no rude or angry  
 Language, and to take every thing kindly  
 that they say or do, and *become like a wean-*  
*ed Child.* But such a Character is not found  
 in every House.

A holy Soul, through the Severity of Pain,  
 may sometimes in such an Hour be too  
 much ruffled by violent and sudden Fits of  
 Impatience. This proceeded to such a De-  
 gree even in that good Man *Job*, under his  
 various Calamities and the sore Boils upon  
 his Flesh, that made him *curse the Day*  
*wherein he was born*, and cry out in the An-  
 guish of his Spirit, *my Soul chuseth Strang-*  
*ling and Death rather than Life*, *Job* iii.  
 and vii. 15. and there have been several In-  
 stances of those who, having not the Fear  
 of God before their Eyes, with hasty Vio-  
 lence and murderous Hands have put an  
 End to their own Lives, through their wild  
 and sinful Impatience of constant Pain.

But these Trials are for ever finished when  
 this Life expires: Then all our Pains are  
 ended for ever if we are found among the  
 Children of God. There is not, nor can be  
 any Temptation in Heaven, to Fretfulness  
 or Disquietude of Mind: All the peevish  
 Passions

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Passions are dropp'd into the Grave, together with the Body of Flesh; and those evil Humours which were the Sources of Smart and Anguish here on Earth have no Place in the new-raised Body: Those irregular Juices of animal Nature which tormented the Nerves, and excited Pain in the Flesh, and which at the same Time provoked Choler and irritated the Spirit, are never found in the heavenly Mansions. There is nothing but Peace and Pleasure, Joy and Love, Goodness and Benevolence, Ease and Satisfaction diffused through all the Regions on high: There are no inward Springs of Uneasiness to ruffle the Mind, none of those fretful Ferments which were wont to kindle in the mortal Body, and explode themselves with Fire and Thunder upon every supposed Offence, or even sometimes without Provocation. O happy State and blessed Mansions of the Saints, when this Body of Sin shall be destroyed, and all the restless Atoms that disquieted the Flesh and provoked the Spirit to Impatience, shall be buried in the Dust of Death, and never, never rise again!

6. *Pain carries a Temptation with it, sometimes to repine and murmur at the Providence of God.* Not Fellow-Creatures alone, but even our sovereign Creator comes within the Reach of the peevish Humours, which are alarmed and roused by sharp or

con-

**DISC.** continual Pain. *Jonah* the Prophet, when  
**IX.** he felt the sultry Heat of the Sun smite  
 fiercely upon him, and the Gourd which  
 gave him a friendly Shadow was withered  
 away, he told God himself in a Passion,  
 that *he did well to be angry, even unto Death,*  
*Jonah iv. 9.* And even the Man of Uz,  
 the Pattern of Patience, was sometimes  
 transported with the Smart and Maladies  
 that were upon him, so that he complained  
*against* God as well as complained *to* him,  
 and used some very unbecoming Expressi-  
 ons toward his Maker. When we are un-  
 der the smarting Rebukes of Providence,  
 we are ready to compare ourselves with o-  
 thers who are in Peace, and then the envi-  
 ous and the murmuring Humour breaks  
 out into rebellious Language, *Why am I thus*  
*afflicted more than others? Why hast thou set*  
*me as a Mark for thine Arrows? Why dost*  
*thou not let loose thy Hand and cut me off from*  
*the Earth?*

But in Heaven there is a glorious Reverse  
 of all such unhappy Scenes: There is no Pain  
 nor any Temptation to murmur at the Deal-  
 ings of the Almighty: There is nothing  
 that can incline us to think hardly of God:  
 The Days of Chastisement are for ever end-  
 ed, and painful Discipline shall be used no  
 more. We shall live for ever in the Em-  
 braces of the Love of God, and he shall be  
 the Object of our everlasting Praise. Per-  
 fect



fect Felicity without the Interruption of **DISC**  
 one uneasy Thought, for ever forbids the **IX.**  
 Inhabitants of that World to repine at their  
 Situation under the eternal Smiles of that  
 blessed Being that made them.

7. To add no more, *Pain and Anguish*  
*of the Flesh have sometimes prevail'd so far*  
*as to distract the Mind as well as destroy the*  
*Body.* It has overpowered all the reasoning  
 Faculties of Man, it has destroyed natural  
 Life, and brought it down to the Grave:  
 The Senses have been confounded, and the  
 Understanding overwhelm'd with severe and  
 racking Pain, especially where there hath  
 been an impatient Temper to contest with  
 them. Extreme Smart of the Flesh distress-  
 es feeble Nature, and turns the whole Frame  
 of it upside down in wild Confusion: It  
 has actually worn out this Animal Frame,  
 and stopp'd all the Springs of vital Motion.  
 The Gout and the Stone have brought  
 Death upon the Patient in this Manner;  
 and a dreadful Manner of dying it is, to  
 have Breath, and Life and Nature quite op-  
 press'd and destroy'd with intense and pain-  
 ful Sensations.

But when we survey the Mansions of  
 the heavenly World, we shall find none of  
 these Evils there: No Danger of any such  
 Events as these; for there is no Pain, no  
 Sorrow, no Crying, no Death nor Destruc-  
 tion there. The Mind shall be for ever  
 clear

**DISC.** ever clear and serene in the Bliss and Happiness of the separate State. And when the Body shall be raised again, that glorified Body, as was intimated a little before, shall have none of the Seeds of Distemper in it, no Ferments that can rack the Nerves, or create Anguish; no Fever, or Gout, or Stone, was ever known in that Country, no Head-ach or Heart-ach have ascended thither.

That Body also shall be capable of no outward Wounds nor Bruises, for it is raised only for Happiness, and leaves all the Causes of Pain behind it. It is a Body made for Immortality and Pleasure; there the sickly Christian is delivered from all the Maladies of the Flesh, and the Twinges of acute Pain which made him groan here on Earth Night and Day. There the Martyrs of the Religion of *Jesus*, and all the holy Confessors are free from their cruel Tormentors, those furly Executioners of *Heathen* Fury, or *Antichristian* Wrath: They are for ever released from Racks, and Wheels, and Fires, and every Engine of Torture and Smart. Immortal Ease and unfading Health and Cheerfulness run through their eternal State, and all the Powers of the Man are composed for the most regular Exercises of Devotion and divine Joy.

Thus I have endeavour'd briefly to set the different States of Heaven and Earth before

before you enter this distinguishing Chapter, DISC.  
*namely, that all the tempting, the distressing, and mischievous Attendants and Consequences of Pain, to which we are exposed in our mortal Life, are for ever banish'd from the Heavenly World.*

## SECTION II.

The second general Inquiry was this, *What just and convincing Arguments or Proofs can be given, that there are no Pains or uneasy Sensations to be felt by the Saints in a future State, nor to be fear'd after this Life.*

My Answers to this Question shall be very few, because I think the thing must be sufficiently evident to those who believe the New Testament, and have liberty to read it.

*1st Argument.* God has assured us so in his Word, that there is no Pain for holy Souls to endure in the World to come? My Text may be esteem'd a sufficient Proof of it; for whatsoever particular Event or Period of the Church on Earth this Prophecy may refer to, yet the Description is borrow'd from the Blessedness of Heaven; and if there shall be any such State on Earth, much more will it be so in the heavenly World, whereof that Period on Earth is but a Shadow and Emblem. We are expressly told,



DISC. Rev. xiv. 13. in order to encourage the persecuted Saints and Martyrs. *Blessed are the Dead who die in the Lord from henceforth, for they rest from their Labours [or Pains] and their Works follow them* 201. 6. in a way of gracious Recompence. *It is granted indeed by the Papists themselves, that in Heaven there is no Pain; yet they suppose there are many and grievous Pains for the Soul to undergo in a Place call'd Purgatory, after the Death of the Body, before it arrives at Heaven.* But give me leave to ask, Does not St. Paul express himself with Confidence concerning himself and his Fellow-Christians, *that they shall be present with the Lord when they are absent from the Body*, 2 Cor. v. 8? Surely the State wherein Christ our Lord dwells after all his Sufferings and Agonies, is a State of everlasting Ease without Suffering; and shall not his Followers dwell with him? Do we not read in the Parable of our Saviour, *Luke xvi. 22.* that *Lazarus* was no sooner dead, but *his Soul was carried by Angels into the Bosom of Abraham, or Paradise?* Every holy Soul wherein the Work of Grace is begun, and Sin hath received its mortal Wound, is perfectly sanctify'd when it is released from this Body, and it puts off the Body of Sin and the Body of Flesh together, for *nothing that defileth must enter into Paradise, or the heavenly State.*

The

The Word of God has appointed but *two States* (viz.) *Heaven and Hell*, for the Reception of all Mankind when they depart from this World: And how vain a Thing must it be for Men to invent a *third State*, and make a *Purgatory* of it? This is a Building erected by the Church of Rome between Heaven and Hell, and prepared by their wild Imagination for Souls of imperfect Virtue, to be tormented there with Pains equal to those of Hell, but of shorter Duration. This State of fiery Purgation, and extrem Anguish, is devised by that Mother of Lies, partly under a Pretence of completing the Penances and Satisfactions for the Sins of Men committed in this Life, and partly also to purify and refine their Souls from all the remaining Dregs of Sin, and to fill up their Virtues to Perfection, that they may be fit for the immediate Presence of God. But does not the Scripture sufficiently inform us, that the Atonement or Satisfaction of *Christ* for Sin is full and complet in itself, and needs none of our Additions in this World or another? Does not the Apostle *John* tell us, 1st Epist. ch. i. ver. 7. *The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin*? Nor shall the Saints after this Life sin any more, to require any new Atonement; nor do they carry the Seeds of Sin to Heaven with them, but drop them together with the Flesh, and all the Sources of

**DISC.** Pain together. Now since neither *Christ*  
**IX.** nor his Apostles give us any Intimation of  
 such a Place as *Purgatory* for the Refine-  
 ment or Purification of Souls after this Life,  
 we have no ground to hearken to such a  
 Fable.

The second Argument is this: *God has*  
*not provided any Medium to convey Pain to*  
*holy Souls after they have dropp'd this Body of*  
*Flesh.* They are pardon'd, they are sancti-  
 fy'd, they are accepted of God for ever;  
 and since they are in no danger of sinning  
 afresh by the Influences of corrupt Flesh and  
 Blood, therefore they are in no fear of suf-  
 fering any thing thereby. And if, as some  
 Divines have suppos'd, there should be any  
 pure æthereal Bodies or Vehicles provided  
 for holy separate Spirits, when departed from  
 this grosser Tabernacle of Flesh and Blood,  
 yet it cannot be supposed that the God of  
 all Grace would mix up any Seeds of Pain  
 with that æthereal Matter, which is to be  
 the occasional Habitation of sanctify'd Spi-  
 rits in that State, nor that he would make  
 any Avenues or Doors of Entrance for Pain  
 into these refined Vehicles, when the State  
 of their Sinning and their Trial is for ever  
 finished.

Nor will the Body at the final Resurrec-  
 tion of the Saints be made for a Medium of  
 any painful Sensations. All the Pains of  
 Nature are ended, when the first Union be-



tween Flesh and Spirit is dissolved. When **DISC**  
 this Body lies down to sleep in the Dust, it **IX**  
 shall never awake again with any of the  
 Principles of Sin or Pain in it: Tho' it be  
 sown in Weakness, it is raised in Power;  
 tho' it be sown in Dishonour, it is raised in  
 Glory; and we shall be made like the Son of  
 God without Sorrow and without Sin for  
 ever.

3d Argument. *There are no moral Causes  
 or Reasons why there should be any thing of  
 Pain provided for the heavenly State. And if  
 there be no moral Reasons for it, surely God  
 will not provide Pains for his Creatures with-  
 out Reason! But this Thought leads me to  
 the next general Head of my Discourse.*

### SECTION III.

The third general Enquiry which I pro-  
 posed to make was this, *What may be the  
 chief moral Reasons, Motives, or Designs of  
 the blessed God in sending Pain on his Crea-  
 tures here below; and at the same time I shall  
 shew that these Designs and Purposes of God  
 are finish'd, and they have no Place in Hea-  
 ven.*

1st, Then, Pain is sometimes sent into our  
 Natures to awaken slothful and drowsy Chri-  
 stians out of their spiritual Slumbers, or to  
 rouse stupid Sinners from a State of spiritual  
 Death. Intense and sharp Pain of the Flesh

DISC. has oftentimes been the appointed and effectual Means of Providence to attain these  
 IX. desirable Ends.

Pain is like a Rod in the Hand of God, wherewith he smites Sinners that are dead in their Trespases, and his Spirit joins with it to awaken them into spiritual Life. This Rod is sometimes so smarting and severe, that it will make a senseless and ungodly Wretch look upwards to the Hand that smites it, and take notice of the Rebuke of Heaven, tho' all the Thundering and Lightning of the Word, and all the Terrors of Hell denounced there, could not awaken them.

Acute Pain is also a common Instrument in our heavenly Father's Hand, to recover back-sliding Saints from their secure and drowsy Frames of Spirit. *David* often found it so, and speaks it plainly in the 38th and 39th *Psalms*; and in *Psalms* cxix. 67. he confesses, *before I was afflicted I went astray*; but when he had felt the Scourge, he learnt to obey, and to keep the Word of his God.

But there is no need of this Discipline in Heaven: no need of this smarting Scourge to make dead Sinners feel their Maker's Hand, in order to rouse them into Life, for there are no such Inhabitants in that World: Nor is there any need of such Divine and Paternal Discipline of God in those holy Mansions, where there is no drowsy Christian

to

to be awakened, no wandering Spirit that wants to be reduced to Duty: And where the Designs of such smarting Strokes have no Place, Pain itself must be for ever banish'd; for *God does not willingly afflict, nor take Delight in grieving the Children of Men*, without substantial Reasons for it.

2. Another Use of bodily Pain and Anguish in this World is, *to punish Men for their Faults and Follies, to make them know what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God, and thereby to guard them against new Temptations*, Jer. ii. 19. *Thy own Wickedness shall correct thee, and thy Backsliding shall reprove thee*; i. e. by means of the smarting Chastisements they bring upon Men. When God makes the Sinner taste of the Fruit of his own Ways, he makes others also observe how hateful a thing every Sin is in the Sight of God, which he thinks fit so terribly to punish.

This is one general Reason why special Diseases, Maladies, and Plagues are spread over a whole Nation, (*viz.*) to punish the Sins of the Inhabitants, when they have provoked God by publick and spreading Iniquities. War and Famine, with all their terrible Train of Anguish and Agony, and the dying Pains which they diffuse over a Kingdom, are Rods of Punishment in the Hand of God, the Governor of the World, to declare from Heaven and Earth his Indignation



DISC. dignation against an ungodly and an un-  
 IX. righteous Age.

*This indeed is one Design of the Pains and Torments of Hell, where God inflicts Pain without Intermission: And this is sometimes the Purpose of God in his painful Providences here on Earth: Shall I rise yet higher and say, that this was one great Design in the Eye of God, when it pleased the Father to bruise his best beloved Son, and put him under the Impressions of extreme Pain, (viz.) to discover to the World the abominable Evil that was in Sin? While Jesus stood in the stead of Sinners, then his Soul was exceeding sorrowful even to Death, and he sweat Drops of Blood under the Pressure of his Agonies, to let the World see what the Sin of Man had deserved: And sometimes God smites his own Children in this World with smarting Strokes of Correction, when they have indulged any Iniquity, to shew the World that God hates Sin in his own People wheresoever he finds it, and to bring his Children back again to the Paths of Righteousness.*

*But in the heavenly State there are no Faults to punish, no Follies to chastize. Jesus, our Surety in the Days of his Flesh, has suffer'd those Sorrows which made Atonement for Sin, and that Anguish of his holy Soul, and the Blood of his Cross, have satisfy'd the Demands of God; so that with Honour he can pardon*

ten thousand penitent Criminals, and provide an Inheritance of Ease and Blessedness for them for ever. When once we are dismissed from this Body, the Spirit is thoroughly sanctified, and there is no Fire of Purgatory needful to burn out the Remains of Sin: Those foolish invented Flames are but false Fire, kindled by the Priests of Rome to fright the Souls of the Dying, and to squeeze Money out of them to purchase so many vain and idle Masses to relieve the Souls of the Dead: Upon our actual Release from this Flesh and Blood, neither the Guilt nor the Power of Sin shall attend the Saints in their Flight to Heaven: All the Spirits that arrive there are made perfect in Holiness without new Scourges, and commence a State of Felicity that shall never be interrupted.

3. God has appointed Pain in this World, *to exercise and try the Virtues and the Graces of his People.* As Gold is thrown into the Fire to prove and try how pure it is from any coarse Alloy, so the Children of God are sometimes left for a Season in the Furnace of Sufferings, partly to refine them from their Dross, and partly to discover their Purity, and their substantial Weight and Worth.

Sometimes God lays *smarting Pain with his own Hand* on the Flesh of his People, on purpose to try their Graces: When we endure the Pain without murmuring at Providence, then it is we come off Conquerors.

Christian

**DISC.** Christian Submission and Silence under the  
**IX.** Hand of God, is one Way to Victory.

*I was dumb, says David, and open'd not my Mouth, because thou didst it, Psal. xxxix.*

Our Love to God, our Resignation to his Will, our holy Fortitude and our Patience find a proper Trial in such smarting Seasons. Perhaps when some severe Pain first seizes and surprizes us, we find ourselves *like a wild Bull in a Net*, and all the Powers of Nature are thrown into Tumult and Disquietude, so that we have no Possession of our own Spirits; but when the Hand of God has continued us a while under this divine Discipline, we learn to bow down to his Sovereignty, we lie at his Footstool calm and composed: He brings our haughty and reluctant Spirits down to his Foot, and makes us lie humble in the Dust, and we wait with Patience the Hour of his Release. *Rom. v.*

*3, 4. Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience under Tribulation gives us Experience of the Dealings of God with his People, and makes our Way to a confirmed Hope in his Love. The Evidence of our various Graces grows brighter and stronger under a smarting Rod, till we are settled in a joyful Confidence, and the Soul rests in God himself.*

Sometimes he has permitted evil Angels to put the Flesh to Pain, for the Trial of his Children; so Job was smitten with sore Boils from



from Head to Foot by the Malice of Satan, **DISC.**  
at the Permission of God, but he knows the **IX.**  
Way that I take, says this holy Man, and  
when he has tried me I shall come forth as  
Gold; for my Foot hath held his Steps thro'  
all these Trials, neither have I gone back  
from the Commandments of his Lips, Job xxiii.  
10, 12.

At other times he suffers wicked Men to  
spend their own Malice, and to inflict dread-  
ful Pains on his own Children: Look back  
to the Years of ancient Persecution in the  
Land of Israel, under Jewish or Heathen  
Tyrants; review the Annals of Great Bri-  
tain; look over the Seas into Popish King-  
doms; take a View of the cursed Courts of  
Inquisition in Spain, Portugal, and Italy;  
behold the Weapons, the Scourges, the  
Racks, the Machines of Torture and En-  
gines of Cruelty, devised by the barbarous  
and inhuman Wit of Men, to constrain the  
Saints to renounce their Faith, and dishonour  
their Saviour. See the slow Fires where the  
Martyrs have been roasted to Death with  
lingering Torment: These are Seasons of  
terrible Trial indeed, whereby the Malice  
of Satan and Antichrist would force the Ser-  
vants of God, and the Followers of the  
Lamb, into sinful Compliances with their  
Idolatry, or a Desertion of their Post of  
Duty: But the Spirit of God has supported  
his Children to bear a glorious Testimony  
to

**DISC.** to pure and undefiled Religion, and they  
**IX.** have seem'd to mock the Rage of their Tormentors, to defy all the Stings of Pain, and triumphed over all their vain Attempts, to compel them to sin against their God.

One would sometimes be ready to wonder, that a God of infinite Mercy and Compassion should suffer his own dear Children to be tried in so terrible a manner as this; but unsearchable Wisdom is with him, and he does not give an Account to Men of all the Reasons and the Rules of his Conduct. This has been his Method of Providence with his Saints at especial Seasons, under the *Jewish* and the *Christian* Dispensations, and perhaps under all the Dispensations of God to Men, from the Days of *Cain* and *Abel* to the present Hour. Our blessed Lord has given us many Warnings of it in his Word by his own Mouth, and by all his three Apostles, *Paul*, *Peter*, and *John*: *They that will live gladly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution: Think it not strange therefore concerning the fiery Trial: The Devil, by his wicked Agents, shall cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have Tribulation ten Days, but fear none of the Things which thou shalt suffer: Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.*

But blessed be God that this World is the only Stage of such Trials. As soon as the State of Probation is finished, the State of Recom-

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Recompence begins. Such hard and painful Exercises to try the Virtues of the Saints, have no Place in that World which was not made for a Stage of Trial and Conflict, but a Palace of glorious Reward. *Heaven is the Place where Crowns and Prizes are distributed to all those blessed ones who have endured Temptation, and who have been found faithful to the Death. These sharp and dreadful Combats with Pain, have no Place among Conquerors, who have finish'd their Warfare, and have begun their Triumph.*

4. *Pain is sent us by the Hand of Providence to teach us many a Lesson both of Truth and Duty, which perhaps we should never have learnt so well without it. This sharp Sensation awakens our best Powers to attend to those Truths and Duties which we took less notice of before: In the time of perfect Ease we are ready to let them lie neglected or forgotten, till God our great Master takes his Rod in hand for our Instruction.*

#### SECTION IV.

And this leads me to the *fourth general Head* of my Discourse, and that is, to enquire what are those spiritual Lessons which may be learnt on Earth from the Pains we have suffer'd, or may suffer in the Flesh. I shall divide them into two sorts, (*viz.*) Lessons of Instruction in useful Truth, and Lessons



**DISC.** *Lessons of Duty, or Practical Christianity;* and there are many of each kind with which the Disciples of *Christ in this World* may be better acquainted, by the actual Sensations of Pain, than any other Way: *In this World* I say, and *in this only*; for in *Heaven* most of these *Lessons of Doctrine and Practice* are utterly needless to be taught, either because they have been so perfectly well known to all its Inhabitants before, and their present Situation makes it impossible to forget them; or they shall be let into the fuller Knowledge of them in Heaven in a far superior Way of Instruction, and without any such uneasy Discipline. And this I shall evidently make appear, when I have first enumerated all these *general Lessons* both of *Truth and Duty*, and shewn how wisely the Great God has appointed them to be taught here on Earth, under the Scourge and the wholesome Discipline of Pain in the Flesh.

**I.** *The Lessons of Instruction here on Earth, or the useful Truths, are such as these:*

1. Pain teaches us feelingly *what feeble Creatures we are, and how entirely dependant on God our Maker for every Hour and Moment of Ease.* We are naturally wild and wanton Creatures, and especially in the Season of Youth, our gayer Powers are gadding abroad at the Call of every Temptation; but

but when God sends his Arrows into our **DESC**  
Flesh, he arrests us on a sudden, and teaches **IX**  
us that we are but Men, poor feeble dying  
Creatures, soon crushed, and sinking under  
his Hand. We are ready to exult in the  
Vigour of Youth, when animal Nature, in  
its Prime of Strength and Glory, raises our  
Pride, and supports us in a sort of Self-  
sufficiency; we are so vain and foolish, as  
to imagine nothing can hurt us: But when  
the Pain of a little Nerve seizes us, and we  
feel the acute Twinges of it, we are made  
to confess that *our Flesh is not Iron, nor our*  
*Bones Brass*; that we are by no means the  
Lords of ourselves, or Sovereigns over our  
own Nature: We cannot remove the least  
Degree of Pain, till the Lord who sent it  
takes off his Hand, and commands the Smart  
to cease. If the Torture fix itself but in a  
Finger or a Toe, or in the little Nerve of a  
Tooth, what intense Agonies may it create  
in us; and that beyond all the Relief of Me-  
dicines, till the Moment wherein God shall  
give us Ease. This Lesson of the Frailty of  
human Nature must be some time written  
upon our Hearts in deep and smarting Cha-  
racters, by intense Pain, before we have learnt  
it well; and this gives us, for time to come,  
a happy Guard against our Pride and Va-  
nity. *Psal. xxxix. 10.* When *David* felt  
the Stroke of the Hand of God upon him,  
and corrected him with sharp Rebukes for  
his

DISC his Iniquity, he makes an humble Address to  
 IX. God, and acknowledges that his *Beauty*,  
 and all the boasted Excellencies of *Flesh* and  
*Blood*, consume away like a Moth; surely every  
*Man is Vanity*! Psal. xix. 10, 11.

2. The next useful Truth in which Pain instructs us, is the great Evil that is contain'd in the Nature of Sin, because it is the Occasion of such intense Pain and Misery to human Nature. I grant, I have hinted this before, but I would have it more powerfully impress'd upon our Spirits, and therefore I introduce it here again in this Part of my Discourse as a *spiritual Lesson*, which we learn under the Discipline of our Heavenly Father.

'Tis true indeed that innocent Nature was made capable of Pain in the first *Adam*, and the innocent Nature of the Man *Jesus Christ* suffer'd acute Pain, when he came in the Likeness of sinful *Flesh*: But if *Adam* had continued in his State of Innocence, it is a great Question with me, whether he or his Children would have actually tasted or felt what acute Pain is; I mean such *Pain* as we now suffer, such as makes us so far unhappy, and such as we cannot immediately relieve.

It may be granted, that natural Hunger, and Thirst, and Weariness after Labour, would have carried in them some Degrees of Pain or Uneasiness, even in the State of Inno-



Innocence; but the sense necessary to a DISC  
wakened Nature's *IX* feel Food and Rest, and  
to put the Man's mind to supply his na-  
tural Wants; and Man might have imme-  
diately relieved them himself, for the Sup-  
plies of Life were at hand; and these sort  
of Uneasinesses were abundantly compen-  
sated by the Pleasure of Rest and Food, and  
perhaps they were in some measure necessary  
to make Food and Rest pleasant.

But surely if Sin had never been known  
in our World, all the Pain that arises from  
inward Diseases of Nature, or from out-  
ward Violence, had been a Stranger to hu-  
man Race; an unknown Evil among the  
Sons of Men, as it is among the holy An-  
gels, the Sons of God. There had been no  
Distempers or acute Pains to meet young  
Babes at their Entrance into this World; no  
Maladies to attend the Sons and Daughters  
of *Adam* thro' the Journey of Life; and  
they should have been translated to some  
higher and happier Region, without Death,  
and without Pain.

It was the eating of the Tree of Know-  
ledge of Good and Evil, that acquainted  
*Adam* and his Offspring with the Evil of  
Pain. Or if Pain could have attack'd In-  
nocence in any Form or Degree, it would  
have been but in a way of Trial, to exer-  
cise and illustrate his Virtues; and if he had  
endured the Test, and continued innocent,

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I am satisfy'd he should never have felt any Pain which was not over-balanced with superior Pleasure, or abundantly recompensed by succeeding Rewards and Satisfaction.

Some Persons indeed have supposed it within the Reach of the Sovereignty of God to afflict and torment a sinless Creature: Yet I think it is hardly consistent with his Goodness, or his Equity, to constrain an innocent Being, which has no Sin, to suffer Pain without his own Consent, and without giving that Creature equal or superior Pleasure as a Recompence. Both those were the Case in the Sufferings of our Blessed Lord in his human Nature, who was perfectly innocent: 'Twas with his own Consent that he gave himself up to be a Sacrifice, when it pleased the Father to bruise him and put him to Grief; and God rewarded him with transcendent Honours and Joys after his Passion, he exalted him to his own right Hand and his Throne, and gave him Authority over all Things.

In general therefore we have sufficient Reason to say, that as Sin brought in Death into human Nature, so it was Sin that brought in Pain also; and wheresoever there is any Pain suffer'd among the Sons and Daughters of Men, I am sure we may venture to assert boldly, that the Sufferer may learn the Evil of Sin. Even the Son of God himself, when he suffer'd Pain in his Body, as well

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well as Anguish in his Spirit, has told us by his Apostles, that our Sins were the Causes of it: *he bore our Sins on his own Body on the Tree, and for our Iniquities he was bruised*, so says *Isaiah the Prophet*, and so speaks *Peter the Apostle*.

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DISC.  
IX.

And sometimes the Providence of God is pleased to point out to us the particular Sin we are guilty of by the special Punishment which he inflicts. In 107 Psalm 17, 18. *Fools are said to be afflicted, i. e. with Pain and Sickness, because of their Transgressions of Riot and Intemperance; their Soul abhors all manner of Meat, and they draw near to the Gates of Death.* Sickness and Pain over-balance all the Pleasures of Luxury in Meats and Drinks, and make the *Epicure* pay dear for the Elegance of his Palate, and the sweet Relish of his Morfels or his Cups. The Drunkard, in his Debauches, is preparing some smarting Pain for his own Punishment. And let us all be so wise as to learn this Lesson by the Pains we feel, that Sin which introduced them into the World is an abominable Thing in the Sight of God, because it provokes him to use such smarting Strokes of Discipline in order to recover us from our Folly, and to reduce us back again to the Paths of Righteousness.

O blessed Smart! O happy Pain, that helps to soften the Heart of a Sinner, and melts it to receive divine Instruction, which



DISC. before was hard as Iron, and attended to no  
 IX. divine Counsel! We are ready to wander  
 from God, and forget him amongst the  
 Months and the Years of Ease and Pleasure;  
 but when the Soul is melted in this Pur-  
 nace of painful Sufferings, it more easily re-  
 ceives some divine Stamp, some lasting Im-  
 pression of Truth, which the Words of the  
 Preacher and the Book of God had before  
 inculcated without Success, and repeated al-  
 most in vain. Happy is the Soul that learns  
 this Lesson thoroughly, and gains a more last-  
 ing Acquaintance with the Evil of Sin, and  
 Abhorrence of it, under the smarting Stroke  
 of the Hand of God. *Blessed is the Man  
 whom thou correctest, O Lord, and teachest  
 him the Truths that are written in thy Law,*  
 Psalm xciv. 12.

3. Pain in the Flesh teaches us also how  
 dreadfully the great God can punish Sin and  
 Sinners when he pleases, in this World or in  
 the other. 'Tis written in the Song of Moses,  
 the Man of God, Psalm xc. 11. *According  
 to thy Fear, so is thy Wrath,* i. e. the Dis-  
 pleasure and Anger of the Blessed God is as  
 terrible as we can fear it to be; and he can  
 inflict on us such intense Pains and Ago-  
 nies, whose distressing Smart we may learn  
 by feeling a little of them. Unknown Mul-  
 tiplications of racking Pain, lengthen'd out  
 beyond Years and Ages, is part of the De-  
 scription of hellish Torments, and the other  
 Part

Part lies in the bitter Twinges of Conscience DISC.  
and keen Remorse of Soul, for our past Ini- IX.  
quities, but without all Hope. Behold a  
Man under a sharp Fit of the Gout or Stone,  
which wrings the Groans from his Heart,  
and Tears from his Eye-lids; this is the  
Hand of God in the present World, where  
there are many Mixtures of Divine Good-  
ness; but if ever we should be so wilfully  
unhappy as to be plunged into those Re-  
gions where the Almighty Vengeance of  
God reigns, without one Beam of Divine  
Light or Love, this must be dreadful in-  
deed. *'Tis a fearful thing to fall into the  
Hands of the living God,* Heb. x. 31. to be  
banish'd far off from all that is holy and  
happy, and to be confin'd to that dark  
Dungeon, that Place of Torture, *where the  
gnawing Worm of Conscience never dies,  
and where the Fire of Divine Anger is ne-  
ver quenched.*

We who are made up of Flesh and Blood,  
which is interwoven with many Nerves and  
Muscles, and Membranes, may learn a little  
of the Terrors of the Lord, if we reflect  
that every Nerve, Muscle, and Membrane  
of the Body is capable of giving us most  
sharp and painful Sensations. We may be  
wounded in every sensible Part of Nature;  
Smart and Anguish may enter in at every  
Pore, and make almost every Atom of our  
Constitution an Instrument of our Anguish.

DISC. *Fearfully and wonderfully are we formed*  
 IX. indeed, capable of Pain all over us; and if  
 a God should see fit to punish Sin to its full  
 Desert, and penetrate every Atom of our  
 Nature with Pain, what surprising and in-  
 tolerable Misery must that be? And if God  
 should raise the Wicked out of their Graves  
 to dwell in such sort of Bodies again, on  
 purpose to shew his just Anger against Sin  
 in their Punishment, how dreadful, beyond  
 Expression, must their Anguish be thro' the  
 long Ages of Eternity? God can form even  
 such Bodies for Immortality, and can sustain  
 them to endure everlasting Agonies.

Let us think again, that when the Hand  
 of our Creator sends Pain into our Flesh,  
 we cannot avoid it, we cannot fly from it,  
 we carry it with us wheresoever we go: His  
 Arrows stick fast in us, and we cannot shake  
 them off; oftentimes it appears that we can  
 find no Relief from Creatures: and if by  
 the Destruction of ourselves, i. e. of these  
 Bodies, we plunge ourselves into the World  
 of Spirits at once, we shall find the same  
 God of Holiness and Vengeance there, who  
 can pierce our Souls with unknown Sorrows,  
 equal, if not superior, to all that we felt in  
 the Flesh. *If I make my Bed in the Grave,*  
*Lord, thou art there,* thy Hand of Justice  
 and Punishment would find me out.

What a formidable Thing it is to such  
 Creatures as we are, to have God, our Maker,  
 for



for our Enemy? that God who has all the Tribes of Pain and Disease, and the innumerable Host of Maladies at his Command? He fills the Air in which we breathe with Fevers and Pestilences as often as he will. The Gout and the Stone arrest and seize us by his Order, and stretch us upon a Bed of Pain: Rheumatisms and Cholicks come and go wheresoever he sends them, and execute his Anger against Criminals. He keeps in his Hand all the various Springs of Pain, and every invisible Rack that can torment the Head or Members, the Bowels or the Joints of Man: He sets them at their dreadful Work when and where he pleases. Let the Sinner tremble at the Name of his Power and Terror, who can fill both Flesh and Spirit with thrilling Agonies, and yet he never punishes beyond what our Iniquities deserve. How necessary is it for such sinful and guilty Beings as we are, whose Natures are capable of such constant and acute Sensations of Pain, to have the God of Nature our Friend and our reconciled God?

4. When we feel the acute Pains of Nature, we may learn something of the exceeding Greatness of the Love of Christ, even the Son of God, that glorious Spirit, who took upon him Flesh and Blood for our Sakes, that he might be capable of Pain and Death, tho' he had never sinned. He endured intense Anguish, to make Atonement for our Crimes.

DISC. Crimes. *Because the Children whom he came*  
 IX. *to save from Misery were Partakers of Flesh*  
*and Blood, he also himself took Part of the*  
*same, that he might suffer in the Flesh, and*  
*by his Sufferings put away our Sins.*

Happy was he in his Father's Bosom, and the Delight of his Soul thro' many long Ages before his Incarnation. But he condescended to be born in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, that he might feel such Smart and Sorrows as our Sins had exposed us to. His innocent and holy Soul was incapable of such sort of Sufferings till he put on this Clothing of human Nature, and became a Surety for sinful perishing Creatures.

Let us survey his Sufferings a little. He was born to Sorrow, and train'd up thro' the common uneasy Circumstances of the Infant and Childish State, till he grew up to Man: What Pains did attend him in Hunger and Thirst, and Weariness, while he travell'd on foot from City to City, thro' Wilds and Desarts, where there was no Food nor Rest? The Son of Man sometimes wanted the common Bread of Nature, nor had he where to lay his Head. What uneasy Sensations was he exposed to, when he was buffeted, when he was smitten on the Cheek, when his tender Flesh was scourged with Whips, and his Temples were crown'd with Thorns, when his Hands and his Feet were barbarously torn with rude Nails, and

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fasten'd

sustain to the Cross, where the whole Weight of his Body hung on those Wounds? And what Man or Angel can tell the inward Anguish, when his Soul was exceeding sorrowful unto Death, and the Conflicts and Agonies of his Spirit forced out the Drops of bloody Sweat thro' every Pore. 'Twas by the extreme Torture of his Nature that he was supposed to expire on the Cross; these were the Pangs of his Atonement and Agonies that expiated the Sins of Men.

O Blessed Jesus! what manner of Sufferings were these? And what manner of Love was it that willingly gave up thy sacred Nature to sustain them? And what was the Design of them, but to deliver us from the Wrath of God in Hell, to save our Flesh and Spirit from eternal Anguish and Distress there? Why was he made such a Curse for us, but that he might redeem us from the Curse of the Law, and the just Punishment of our own Iniquities.

Let us carry our Thoughts of his Love, and our Benefit by it, yet one Step further: Was it not by these Sorrows, and this painful Passion, that he provided for us this very Heaven of Happiness, where we shall be for ever freed from all Pain? Were they not all endured by him to procure a Paradise of Pleasure, a Mansion of everlasting Peace and Joy for guilty Creatures, who had merited everlasting Pain? Was it not by these

his



**DISC.** his Agonies in the mortal Body, which he assumed, that he purchased for each of us a glorify'd Body, strong and immortal as his own when he rose from the Dead, a Body which has no Seeds of Disease or Pain in it, no Springs of Mortality or Death: May Glory, Honour and Praise, with supreme Pleasure, ever attend the sacred Person of our Redeemer, whose Sorrows and Anguish of Flesh and Spirit were equal to our Misery, and to his own Compassion.

5. Another Lesson, which we are taught by the long and tiresome Pains of Nature, is the Value and Worth of the Word of God, and the Sweetness of a Promise, which can give the kindest Relief to a painful Hour, and soothe the Anguish of Nature. They teach us the Excellency of the Covenant of Grace, which has sometimes strengthen'd the feeblest Pieces of human Nature to bear intense Sufferings in the Body, and which sanctifies them all to our Advantage. Painful and tiresome Maladies teach us to improve the Promises to valuable Purposes, and the Promises take away half the Smart of our Pains by the Sensations of divine Love let into the Soul.

We read of Philosophers and Heroes in some ancient Histories, who could endure Pain by Dint of Reasoning, by a Pride of their Science, by an Obstinacy of Heart, or by natural Courage; but a Christian takes the

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the Word of a Promise, and lies down upon it in the midst of intense Pains of Nature; and the Pleasure of Devotion supplies him with such Ease, that all the Reasonings of Philosophy, all the Courage of Nature, all the Anodynes of Medicine, and soothing Plasters have attempted without Success. When a Child of God can read his Father's Love in a Promise, and by searching into the Qualifications of his own Soul, can lay fast Hold of it by a living Faith, the Rage of his Pain is much allay'd, and made half easy. A Promise is a sweet Couch to rest a languishing Body in the midst of Pains, and a soft Repose for the Head or Heart-ach.

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The *Stoicks* pretended to give Ease to Pain, by persuading themselves *there was no Evil in it*; as tho' the mere misnaming of Things would destroy their Nature: But the Christian, by a sweet Submission to the Evil which his heavenly Father inflicts upon his Flesh, reposes himself at the Foot of God on the Covenant of Grace, and bears the Wounds and the Smart with much more Serenity and Honour. " 'Tis my heavenly Father that scourges me, and I know he " designs me no Hurt, tho' he fills my " Flesh with present Pain: His own Presence, and the Sense of his Love, soften " the Anguish of all that I feel: He bids " me not yield to Fear, for when I pass " thro' the Fires he will be with me; and he " that

DISC. " that loved me, and died for me, has suf-  
 IX. " fer'd greater Sorrows and more Anguish  
 " on my Account, than what he calls me  
 " to bear under the Strokes of his wife and  
 " holy Discipline : He has left his Word  
 " with me as an universal Medicine to re-  
 " lieve me under all my Anguish, till he shall  
 " bring me to those Mansions on high,  
 " where Sorrows and Pains are found no  
 " more."

6. Anguish and Pain of Nature here on Earth teach us *the Excellency and Use of the Mercy-Seat in Heaven, and the admirable Privilege of Prayer.* Even the Sons of meer Nature are ready to think of God at such a Season ; and they who never pray'd before, *pour out a Prayer before him when his Chast'ning is upon them,* Esai. xxvi. 16. An Hour of twinging and tormenting Pain, when Creatures and Medicines can give no Relief, drives them to the Throne of God to try whether he will relieve them or no. But much more delightful is it for a Child of God that has been used to address the Throne of Grace, to run thither with Pleasure and Hope, and to spread all his Anguish before the Face of his heavenly Father. The blessed God has built this Mercy-Seat for his People to bring all their Sorrows thither, and spread them before his Eyes in all their smarting Circumstances, and he has been often pleased to speak a Word of Relief. *Our*



Our Lord *Jesus Christ*, when he dwelt in **DISC.**  
Flesh and Blood, practised this Part of Re- **IX.**  
ligion with holy Satisfaction and Success.

*Being in an Agony he pray'd more earnestly,*  
and *an Angel* was sent to strengthen and  
comfort him, *Luke xxiii. 43, 44.* This was  
the Relief of holy *David* in ancient Times,  
*Psal. xxv. 18. Look upon my Affliction and*  
*my Pain, and pardon all my Sins. Psal. cxvi.*  
*3, 4. The Sorrows of Death compassed me,*  
*and the Pains of Hell, or the Grave, took*  
*hold of me; then called I upon the Name of*  
*the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver*  
*my Soul.* And when he found a gracious  
Answer to his Request, he acknowledges the  
Grace of God therein, and charges his Soul  
to dwell near to God; *return to thy Rest,*  
*O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bounti-*  
*fully with thee: I was brought low, and he*  
*helped me, he deliver'd my Soul from Death,*  
*and mine Eyes from Tears.*

But we have stronger Encouragement than  
*David* was acquainted with, since 'tis re-  
vealed to us, that we have an *High-priest*  
at this Throne ready to bespeak all necessary  
Relief for us there, *Heb. ii. 18. An High-priest*  
*who can be touched with the feeling of our*  
*Infirmities,* who has sustain'd the same Sor-  
rows and Pains in the Flesh, who can pity  
and relieve his People under their Maladies  
and acutest Anguish, *Heb. iv. 15.* When  
we groan and sigh under continued Pains,  
they

**DISC.** they are ready to make Nature weary and faint : We groan unto the Lord, who knows the Language of our Frailty : Our High Priest carries every Groan to the Mercy-Seat : His Compassion works towards his Brethren, and he will suffer them to continue no longer under this Discipline, than is necessary for their own best Improvement and Happiness.

O how much of this sort of Consolation has many a Christian learnt and tasted, by a holy Intercourse with Heaven, in such painful Seasons ? How much has he learnt of the tender Mercies of God the Father, and of the Pity and Sympathy of our great High Priest above ? Who would be content to live in such a painful World as this is, without the Pleasure and Relief of Prayer ? Who would live without an Interest at this Mercy-Seat, and without the supporting Friendship of this Advocate at the Throne ?

Thus I have run over the chief *Lessons of Instruction or Doctrine*, which may be derived from our Sensations of Pain here in this World : But there is no need of this sort of Discipline in the blessed Regions of Heaven to teach the Inhabitants such Truths.

They well remember *what feeble helpless Creatures they were* when they dwelt in Flesh and Blood ; but they have put off those fleshly Garments of Mortality, with  
all

all its Weaknesses together. The Spirits of the Blessed know nothing of those Frailties, nor shall the Bodies of the Saints, new-raised from the Dust, bring back any of their old Infirmities with them. These blessed Creatures know well *how intirely dependent they are for all things upon God* their Creator, without the need of Pains and Maladies to teach them, for they live every Moment with God, and in a full Dependance upon him: They are supported in their Life, and all its everlasting Blessings, by his immediate Presence, Power and Mercy.

They have no need of Pain in those Fields or Gardens of Pleasure to teach them *the Evil of Sin*; they well remember all the Sorrows they have pass'd thro' in their mortal State, while they were traversing the Wilderness of this World, and they know that Sin was the Cause of them all. They see *the Evil of Sin* in the Glass of the divine Holiness, and the hateful Contrariety that is in it to the Nature of God is discover'd in the immediate Light of all his Perfections, his Wisdom, his Truth and his Goodness. They behold the *Evil of Sin* in the Marks of the Sufferings of their blessed Saviour; he appears in Glory as the *Lamb that was slain*, and carries some Memorials of his Death about him, to let the Saints know for ever what he has suffer'd to make Atonement for their Sins.

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Nor



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Nor have the Blessed above any need to learn how dreadfully God can punish Sin and Sinners, while they behold his Indignation going forth in a long and endless Stream, to make the wicked Enemies of God in Hell for ever justly miserable: And in this Sense it may be said, that *the Smoke of their Torments comes up before God and his holy Angels, and his Saints for ever.*

Nor do these happy Beings stand in need of new Sensations of Pain, to teach them *the exceeding Greatness of the Love of Christ*, who, exposed himself to intense and smarting Anguish, both of Flesh and Spirit, to procure their Salvation: For while they dwell amidst the Blessednesses of that State, which the Redeemer purchased with the Price of his own Sufferings, they can never forget his Love.

Nor do they want to learn in Heaven the *Value of the Word of God and his Promises*, by which they were supported under their Pains and Sorrows in this mortal State. Those Promises have been fulfill'd to them partly on Earth, and in a more glorious and abundant manner in the heavenly World. They relish the Sweetness of all those Words of Mercy, in reviewing the Means whereby Divine Grace sustain'd them in their former State of Trial, and in the compleat Accomplishment of the best of those Promises in  
their

their present Situation amidst ten thousand  
endless Blessings.

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And if any of them were too cold and remiss, and infrequent in their Applications to the Mercy-Seat by Prayer, when they were here on Earth, and stood in need of Chastisement to make them pour out their Prayers to God, yet they can never forget *the Value of this Privilege*, while they themselves dwell round about the Throne, and behold all their ancient sincere Addresses to the Mercy-Seat answer'd and swallow'd up in the full Fruition of their present Glories and Joys. *Praise* is properly the Language of Heaven, when all their Wants are supplied, and their *Prayers* on Earth are finished, and whatever further Desires they may have to present before God, the Throne of Grace is ever at hand, and God himself is ever in the midst of them to bestow every proper Blessing in its Season that belongs to the heavenly World. Not one of them can any more stand in need of Chastisement or painful Exercises of the Flesh to drive them to the Throne of God, while they are at Home in their Father's House, and for ever near him and his All-sufficiency. 'Tis from thence they are constantly deriving immortal Supplies of Blessedness, as from a Spring that will never fail.

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## SECTION V.

I proceed now to consider in the last Place, what are the *Practical Lessons* which Pain may teach us while we are here on Earth in our State of Probation and Discipline, and shall afterward make it evident, that there is *no need of Pain in Heaven for the same Purposes.*

1. The frequent Returns of Pain may put us in mind to offer to God his due *Sacrifices of Praise for the Months and Years of Ease which we have enjoy'd*; we are too ready to forget the Mercy of God herein, unless we are awaken'd by new painful Sensations; and when we experience new Relief, then our Lips are open'd with Thankfulness, and our Mouth shews forth his Praise: Then we cry out with devout Language, *Blessed be the Lord that has deliver'd us!* When we have been oppress'd for some time with extream Anguish, then one Day, or one Hour of Ease fills the Heart and the Tongue with Thankfulness; *blessed be the God of Nature that has appointed Medicines to restore our Ease, and blessed be that Goodness that has given Success to them!* What a rich Mercy is it under our acute Torments, that there are Methods of Relief and Healing found among the Powers of



of Nature, among the Plants and the Herbs, **DISC.**  
and the Mineral Stores which are under **IX.**  
Ground? Blessed be the Lord, who in the  
Course of his Providence has given Skill to  
Physicians to compose and to apply the  
proper Means of Relief! Blessed be that  
Hand that has planted every Herb in the  
Field or the Garden, and has made the  
Bowels of the Earth to teem with Medi-  
cines for the Recovery of our Health and  
Ease, and blessed be his Name who has re-  
buked our Maladies, who has constrain'd  
the smarting Diseases to depart by the Use  
of Balms and Balsams that are happily ap-  
ply'd!

While we enjoy the Benefits of common  
Life, in Health of Body and in easy Cir-  
cumstances, we are too often thoughtless of  
the Hand of God, which showers down these  
Favours of Heaven upon us in a long and  
constant Succession; but when he sees fit to  
touch us with his Finger, and awaken some  
lurking Malady within us, our Ease va-  
nishes, our Days are restless and painful,  
and tiresome Nights of Darkness pass over  
us without Sleep or Repose. Then we re-  
pent that we have so long forgotten the  
God of our Mercies; and we learn to lift  
up our Praises to the Lord, that every Night  
of our Lives has not been restless, that every  
Day and Hour has not been a Season of

**DISC.** racking Pain. Blessed be the Lord that enables us, without Anguish or Uneasiness, to fulfil the common Business of the Day; and blessed be his Hand that draws the peaceful Curtains of the Night round about us! And even in the midst of moderate Pains, we bless his Name who gives us refreshing Slumbers; and we grow more careful to employ and improve every Moment of returning Ease, as the most proper Way of expressing our Thankfulness to our Almighty Healer.

Alas, what poor, sorry, sinful Creatures are we in the present State, who want to be taught the Value of our Mercies by the Removal of them! The Man of a robust and vigorous Make, and a healthy Constitution, knows not the true Worth of Health and Ease, nor sets a due Value upon these Blessings of Heaven; but we are taught to thank God feelingly, for an easy Hour after long-repeated Twinges of Pain: We bless that Goodness which gives us an easy Night after a Day of distressing Anguish. Blessed be the God of Nature and Grace, that has not made the Gout or the Stone immortal, nor subjected our sensible Powers to an everlasting Cholick or Tooth-ach.

2. Pain in the Flesh more effectually teaches us to sympathize with those who suffer. We learn a Tenderness of Soul experimentally

rimentially by our own Sufferings. We ge- DISC.  
nerally love *Self* so well, that we forget our IX.  
Neighbours under special Tribulation and  
Distress, unless we are made to feel them  
too. In a particular manner, when our Na-  
ture is pinched and pierced thro' with some  
smarting Malady, we learn to pity those  
who lie groaning under the same Disease.  
A Kindred of Sorrows and Sufferings works  
up our Natures into Compassion, and we  
find our own Hearts more sensibly affected  
with the Groans of our Friends under a  
sharp Fit of the Gout or Rheumatism, when  
we ourselves have felt the Stings of the same  
Distemper.

Our blessed Saviour himself, though he  
wanted not Compassion and Love to the  
Children of Men, since he came down from  
Heaven on purpose to die for them, yet he  
is represented to us as our merciful High  
Priest, who had learnt Sympathy and Com-  
passion to our Sorrows in the same Way of  
Experience as we learn it. He was *incom-  
passed about with Infirmities*, when he took  
the sinless Frailties of our Nature upon him,  
that he might learn to pity us under those  
Frailties. *In that he himself bath suffer'd  
being tempted, he is able to succour them that  
are tempted: For we have not an High  
Priest which cannot be touched with the  
Feeling of our Infirmities, but was in all*



**DISC.** *Points tempted like as we are, tho' he was*  
**IX.** *always without Sin; and by the Things*  
*which he suffer'd, he may be said, after*  
*the manner of Men, to learn Sympathy and*  
*Pity to miserable Creatures, as well as Obe-*  
*dience to God, who is blessed for ever,*  
*Heb. ii. 18. and iv. 15. and v. 2, 8.*

3. Since our Natures are subject to Pain, it should teach us *Watchfulness against every Sin, lest we double our own Distresses by the Mixture of Guilt with them.* How careful should we be to keep always a clear Conscience, that we may be able at all times to look up with Pleasure to the Hand of God who smites us, and be better compos'd to endure the Pains which he inflicts upon us for our Trial and Improvement in Grace. Innocence and Piety, and a peaceful Conscience, are an admirable Defence to support the Spirit against the overwhelming Efforts of bodily Pain: But when inward Reproaches of Mind, and a racking Conscience join with acute Pain in the Flesh, 'tis double Misery, and aggravated Wretchedness. The Scourges and inward Remorse of our own Hearts, join'd to the Sorrows of Nature, add Torment to Torment. How dreadful is it when we are forced to confess, *I have procured all this to myself by Intemperance, by my Rashness, by my Obstinacy against the Advice of*  
 Friends,

Friends, and Rebellion against the Com- DESC.  
mands of God! EX.

Probably ~~it was~~ such Circumstances as these, that gave the Soul of David double Anguish, when his Bones waxed old, thro' his roaring all the Day long, when Day and Night the Hand of God was heavy upon him, and his Moisture was turned into the Drought of Summer: when he complain'd unto God, *Thine Arrows stick fast in me, and thy Hand presseth me sore: There is no Soundness in my Flesh, because of thine Anger; nor any Rest in my Bones, because of my Sin. Mine Iniquities are gone over mine Head as an heavy Burden, they are too heavy for me. Deep calls unto Deep at the Noise of thy Water-Spouts, all thy Waves and thy Billows are gone over me. The Deep of Anguish in my Flesh calls to the Deep of Sorrow in my Soul, and make a tremendous Tumult within me. My Wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my Foolishness: I am feeble and sore broken; I have roared by reason of the Disquietness of my Heart; nor could he find any Rest or Ease till he acknowledged his Sin unto God, and confess'd his Transgressions, and till he had some comfortable Hope that God had forgiven the Iniquity of his Sin. See this sorrowful Scene exemplify'd in a very affecting manner in the 32d and 38th Psalms.*

**DISC.** Happy is the Man that walks closely with  
**III.** his God in the Days of Health and Ease,  
 that whenever it shall please his heavenly  
 Father to try him with smarting Pain, he  
 may find sweet Relief from a peaceful Con-  
 science, and humble Appeals to God con-  
 cerning his own Sincerity and Watchful-  
 ness.

4. Pain in the Flesh may sometimes be  
 sent by the Hand of God, to teach us to  
*wean ourselves by degrees from this Body,*  
*which we love too well; this Body, which has*  
*all the Springs of Pain in it.* How little  
 should we be fond of this Flesh and Blood  
 in the present feeble State, wherein we are  
 continually liable to one Malady or an-  
 other; to the Head-ach or the Heart-ach,  
 to Wounds or Bruises, and uneasy Sen-  
 sations of various Kinds? Nor can the Soul  
 secure itself from them, while 'tis so close-  
 ly united to this mortal Body. And yet  
 we are too fond of our present Dwelling,  
 tho' it be but a Cottage of Clay, feeble  
 and ruinous, where the Winds and the  
 Storms are continually ready to break in  
 and distress us. A sorry Habitation in-  
 deed for an immortal Spirit, since Sin has  
 mingled so many Diseases in our Constitu-  
 tion, has made so many Avenues for Smart  
 and Anguish in our Flesh, and we are ca-  
 pable



pable of admitting Pain and Agonies at every Post.

Pain is appointed to be a sort of Balance to the tempting Pleasures of Life, and to make us feel that perfect Happiness does not grow among the Inhabitants of Flesh and Blood. Pain takes away the Pleasures of the Day, and the Repose of the Night, and makes Life bitter in all the returning Seasons. The God of Nature and Grace is pleased, by sending Sickness and Pain, to loosen his own Children by degrees from their fond Attachment to this fleshly Tabernacle, and to make us willing to depart at his Call.

A long Continuance of Pain, or the frequent repeated Twinges of it, will teach a Christian and incline him to meet Death with Courage, at the appointed Hour of Release. This will much abate the Fierceness of the King of Terrors, when he appears as a Sovereign Physician to finish every Malady of Nature. Death is sanctify'd to the holy Soul, and by the Covenant of Grace this Curse of Nature is changed into a Blessing. The Grave is a safe retiring Place from all the Attacks of Disease and Anguish: And there are some Incurables here on Earth, which can find no perfect Relief but in the Grave. Neither Maladies, nor Tyrants can stretch their Terrors beyond this Life; and  
if

**DISC.** if we can but look upon Death as a conquer'd Enemy, and its Sting taken away by the Death of *Christ*, we shall easily venture into this last Combat, and obtain an everlasting Victory. Blessed be God for the Grave as a Refuge from smarting Pains! Thanks be to God thro' *Christ Jesus*, who enables us to triumph over the last Pain of Nature, and to say, O Death, where is thy Sting? and O Grave, where is thy Victory?

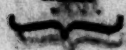
In the fifth and last Place, by the Pains that we suffer in this Body, we are taught to breathe after the Blessedness of the heavenly State, wherein there shall be no Pain. When the Soul is dismiss'd from the Bonds of Flesh, and presented before God in the World of Spirits without Spot or Blemish by *Jesus* our great Forerunner, it is then appointed to dwell among the Spirits of the Just made perfect, who were all released in their several Seasons from the Body of Flesh and Sin. Maladies and Infirmities of every kind are buried in the Grave, and cease for ever; and if we survey the Properties of the new-raised Body in the great Resurrection-Day, as described 1 Cor. xv. we shall find no room for Pain there, no Avenue or Residence for Smart or Anguish. It will not be such a Body of Flesh and Blood which can be a Source of Maladies,

or

or subject to outward Injuries; but by its **DISC.**  
 own Principles of innate Vigour and Im- **EX.**  
 mortality, as well as by the Power and  
 Mercy of God, it shall be for ever secured  
 from those uneasy Sensations which made  
 our Flesh on Earth painful and burden-  
 some, and which tended toward Dissolu-  
 tion and Death. 'Tis such a Body as our  
 Lord Jesus wore at his Ascent to Heaven  
 in a bright Cloud, for ever incorruptible;  
 for Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the King-  
 dom of God, neither doth Corruption inherit  
 Incorruption. As we have borne the Image  
 of the earthly Adam in the Frailties and  
 Sufferings that belong to it, so shall we  
 also bear the Image of the Heavenly, even  
 the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our  
 vile Body, that it may be fashion'd like unto  
 his own glorious Body; according to the work-  
 ing whereby he is able to subdue all Things  
 unto himself, Phil. iii. 21. We shall hunger  
 no more, we shall thirst no more, nor shall  
 the Sun light on us with its parching Beams,  
 nor shall we be annoyed with Fire or Frost,  
 with Heat or Cold, in those temperate and  
 happy Regions. The Lamb which is in the  
 midst of the Throne shall feed his People for  
 ever there with the Fruits of the Tree of  
 Life, and with unknown Entertainments  
 suited to a glorify'd State. He shall lead  
 them to living Fountains of Waters, and  
 God



DISC. God shall wipe away all Tears from their  
Eyes.



Thus have I set before you *the Practical Lessons* which Pain is design'd to teach us in our present State; and we find that a Body subject to Maladies and Pains, is a well appointed School, wherein our great Master gives us these divine Instructions, and trains us up by degrees for the heavenly World. 'Tis rough Discipline indeed for the Flesh, but it is wholesome for the Soul: And there is many a Christian here on Earth that have been made to confess, they had never learnt the Practice of some of these Virtues, if they had not been taught by such sort of Discipline. Pain, which was brought into human Nature at first by Sin, is happily suited by the Providence of God to such a State of Probation, wherein Creatures born in the midst of Sins and Sorrows are by degrees recover'd to the Love of God and Holiness, and fitted for a World of Peace and Joy.

But when we have done with this World, and departed from the Tribes of mortal Men, and from all the Scenes of Allurement and Temptation, there is no more need that *such Lessons* should be taught us in *Heaven*, nor any painful Scourge made use of by the Father of Spirits, to carry on or to maintain the divine Work of Holiness and Grace within

within us. Let us survey this Matter according to the foregoing Particulars. **DISC.**

**IX.**

Is it possible that while the Blessed above are surrounded with endless Satisfaction flowing from the Throne of God and the Lamb, they should *forget their Benefactor*, and *neglect his Praises*? Is it possible they should dwell in immortal Health and Ease without Interruption, under the constant vital Influences of the King of Glory, and yet want Gratitude to the Spring of all their Blessings?

Nor is there any need for the Inhabitants of a World, where no Pains nor Sorrows are found, *to learn Compassion and Sympathy to those who suffer*, for there are no Sufferers there: But Love and Joy, intense and intimate Love, and a Harmony of Joy runs thro' all that blessed Company, and unites them in an universal Sympathy, if I may so express it, or blissful Sensation of each other's Happiness. And I might add also, could there be such a thing as Sorrow and Misery in those Regions, this divine Principle of Love would work sweetly and powerfully towards such Objects in all necessary Compassion.

What if Pain was once made a *Spur to our Duties* in this frail State of Flesh and Blood? What if Pain were design'd as a *Guard against Temptation*, and a *Means to awaken*

**DISC.** *awaken our Watch* against new Transgression and Guilt? But in a Climate where all is Holiness, and all is Peace, in the full Enjoyment of the Great God, and secur'd by that everlasting Covenant which was sealed by the Blood of the Lamb, there is no more danger of sinning. The Soul is moulded into the more compleat Likeness of God, by living for ever under the Light of his Countenance, and the warmest Beams of his Love.

What if we had need of the Stings of Pain and Anguish in time past, *to wean us by degrees from this Body, and from all sensible Things,* and to make us willing to part with them all at the Call of God? Yet when we arrive at the heavenly World, we shall have no more need of being wean'd from Earth, we shall never look back upon that State of Pain and Frailty with a wishful Eye, being for ever satisfy'd in the Affluence of present Joys.

O glorious and happy State! where Millions of Creatures who have dwelt in Bodies of Sin and Pain, and have been guilty of innumerable Follies and Offences against their Maker, yet they are all forgiven, *their Robes are washed, and made white in the Blood of Jesus,* their Iniquities are cancell'd for ever, and there shall not be one Stroke more from the Hand of God to chasten them,



them, nor one more Sensation of Pain to DISC.  
punish them. Divine and illustrious Priv- IX.  
ilege indeed, and a glorious World, where  
compleat Sanctification of all the Powers of  
Nature shall for ever secure us from new  
Sins, and where the Springs and Causes of  
Pain shall for ever cease, both within us  
and without us. Our glorify'd Bodies shall  
have no Avenue for Pain to enter; the  
Gates of Heaven shall admit no Enemy to  
afflict or hurt us; God is our everlasting  
Friend, and our Souls shall be satisfy'd with  
the *Rivers of Pleasure which flow for ever  
at the right Hand of God.* Amen.

DIS

Vol. II. No. 1. The History of the Disc.

There, for one more generation of Pain to DISC.

**DISC OVERS**

IX.

The First Fruit of the Spirit of  
 the Portals of Heaven, which of  
 Pain shall be over each body within us  
 and within R O M A N I A N  
 we no longer for Pain to enter; the  
 the First Fruit of the Spirit of  
 the First Fruit of the Spirit of  
 the First Fruit of the Spirit of  
 the First Fruit of the Spirit of

It is by a beautiful I am of which the DISC

**I** Abolish and be a part of the  
 young Vices, the same as the  
 Creatures in the world, when  
 they are caught in the net of the  
 Dishonour, in the world, when  
 me in the world, when the  
 Sins of the world, when the  
 We know that the world is  
 and we know that the world is  
 The world is full of the  
 growing in the world of  
 such a multitude of wicked men who  
 the Creatures of God to the Dishonour of  
 him that made them: The  
 to give to give Breath to those who  
 who

Vol. II

## DISCOURSE X.

The First Fruits of the Spirit, or  
the Foretaste of Heaven.

R.O.M. VIII. 23.

*And not only they, but ourselves also who have  
the First Fruits of the Spirit, even we  
ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting  
for the Adoption, that is, the Redemption  
of the Body.*

## SECTION I.

**I**T is by a beautiful Figure of Speech the DISC.  
Apostle had been describing, in the fore- X.  
going Verses, the unnatural Abuse which the  
Creatures suffer thro' the Sins of Men, when  
they are employ'd to sinful Purposes and the  
Dishonour of God their Creator. Permit  
me to read the Words and represent the  
Sense of them in a short Paraphrase. *Ver. 22.*  
*We know that the whole Creation groaneth  
and travelleth in Pain together until now.*  
The *Earth* itself may be represented as  
groaning to bear such Loads of Iniquity,  
such a Multitude of wicked Men who abuse  
the Creatures of God to the Dishonour of  
him that made them: The *Air* may be said  
to groan to give Breath to those vile Wretches  
VOL. II. I who



**DISC.** who abuse it in Filthiness and foolish Talk-  
**X.** ing, to the Dishonour of God, and to the  
 Scandal of their Neighbours; it *groans* to  
 furnish Men with Breath that is abused in  
 Idolatry by the false Worship of the true  
 God, or the Worship of Creatures which is  
 abominable in His Sight: The *Sun* itself  
 may be said to *groan* to give Light to those  
 Sinners who abuse both Day-light and Dark-  
 ness in Rioting and Wantonness, in doing  
 Mischief among Men and committing fresh  
 Iniquities against their Maker: The *Moon*  
 and *Stars* are abused by Adulterers and  
 Thieves, and other midnight Sinners, when  
 they any way afford Light enough to them  
 to guide them in their Pursuit of wicked  
 Ways and Practices. The *Beasts of Burthen*  
 may be said also to *groan* and be abused,  
 when they bear the wicked Sons and Daugh-  
 ters of *Adam* to the Accomplishment of their  
 Iniquities: and even all the Parts of the *bru-  
 tal* World, as well as of the *inanimate* Crea-  
 tion, are some way or other made to serve  
 the detestable and wicked Purposes of the  
 sinful Children of Men, and may be figu-  
 ratively said to *groan* on this Account. And  
 if we have tasted of the Fruits of the Spirit  
 of Grace, we cannot but in some measure  
 groan with the rest of the Creation in Ex-  
 pectation of the blessed Day, when the Crea-  
 tures shall be delivered from this Bondage  
 of Corruption, to which the Providence of  
 God

God has suffered them to be subjected in **Disgrace**  
 this degenerate State of Things.

We hope there is a time coming, when  
 the Creatures themselves shall be raised, ac-  
 cording to the original Appointment of their  
 Maker, agreeable to their own first Design,  
 and for the Good of their Fellow-Creatures,  
 and supremely for the Honour of their God,  
*in that Day when Holiness to the Lord shall  
 be written upon the Bells of the Horses; and  
 every Pot in Jerusalem shall be Holiness unto  
 the Lord of Hosts.* Why should we not join  
 them with the whole Creation in groaning  
 and longing after this promised Time, when  
 all the Works of God shall be restor'd to  
 their rightful Life, and the Glory of the  
 Maker shall some way or other be made to  
 shine in every one of them?

The Apostle then adds, in the Words of  
 my Text, *and not these Creatures only, but  
 ourselves also who have the first Fruits of the  
 Spirit*, we who are fill'd with the Gifts and  
 Graces of the Holy Spirit, and eminently  
*the first Fruits* hereof appear in our Taste  
 and Relish of the divine Provisions that God  
 has given us here in this World to prepare  
 us for a better; and even bestows upon some  
 of his Christian Servants these first Fruits of  
 the Tree of Paradise, these Blessings and  
 these Foretastes which are near akin to those  
 of the upper World, when the Saints shall  
 be raised from the Dead, when their Adop-

DISC. tion shall be clearly manifested, and they  
 X. shall look like the Children of God, and  
 their Bodies and all their natural Powers shall  
 be redeemed from those Disorders, whether  
 of Sin or Sorrow, and from all the Springs  
 and Seeds of them, which they are more or  
 less liable to feel in the present State.

Here let it be observed, that the *first Fruits*  
 of any Field, or Plant, or Tree, are of the  
 same Kind with the full Product or the Har-  
 vest: therefore it is plain, that the first Fruits  
 of the Spirit in this place cannot chiefly sig-  
 nify the Gifts of the Spirit, such as the Gifts  
 of Tongues, or of Healing, or of Miracles,  
 nor the Gifts of Prophecy, Preaching, or  
 Praying, because these are not the Employ-  
 ments nor the Enjoyments of Heaven. The  
*first Fruits of the Spirit* must rather refer  
 therefore to the Knowledge and Holiness,  
 the Graces and the Joys which are more per-  
 fect and glorious in the heavenly State, than  
 they were ever design'd to be here upon  
 Earth. Now these first Fruits of Graces and  
 Joys are sometimes bestow'd upon Christians  
 in this World, in such a degree as brings  
 them near to the heavenly State: and that is  
 the chief *Observation* I design to draw from  
 these Words, (viz.) *That God has been pleased*  
*to give some of his Children here on Earth se-*  
*veral of the Foretastes of the heavenly Blessed-*  
*ness, the Graces and the Joys of the upper*  
*World*; as they are the first Fruits of that  
 Paradise



Paradise to which we are travelling: and DISC. these Privileges have brought some of the X. Saints within the Verge of the Courts of Heaven, within the Confines and Borders of the celestial Country. What these are I shall shew immediately; but before I represent them I desire to lay down these few Cautions;

**CAUTION I.** *These sensible Foretastes of Heaven do not belong to all Christians; these are not such general Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, of which every Christian is made Partaker; but they are special Favours now and then bestow'd on some particular Persons by the special Will of God.* (1.) Such as are more eminent in Faith, and Holiness, and Prayer than others are, such as have made great Advancements in every Part of Religion in Mortification to the World, in Spiritual-mindedness, in Humility, and in much Converse with God, &c. Or, (2.) Sometimes these first Fruits may be given unto such as are weak both in Reason and in Faith, and may be Babes in *Christ*, and are not able by their reasoning Powers to search out their Evidences for Heaven, especially under some present Temptation or Darkness. Or, (3.) Sometimes to those who are called by Providence to go thro' huge and uncommon Trials and Sufferings, in order to support

**D**ISCU their Spirits, and bear up their Courage, their  
**X.** Faith and Patience.

It is true, the most general and common way whereby God prepares his People for Heaven, is by leading them thro' several Steps of advancing Holiness, sincere Repentance, Mortification of Sin, Weanedness from the World, Likeness to God, heavenly Mindfulness, &c. These are indeed the usual Preparatives for Glory, and the surest Evidences of a State of Grace. Therefore let not any Person imagine he is not a true Christian, because he hath not enjoy'd these special Favours and signal Manifestations.

**CAUTION 2.** *If there be any who have been favour'd with these peculiar Blessings, they must not expect them to be constant and perpetual, nor always to be given in the same Manner or same Measure; they are rare Blessings and special reviving Cordials; they are not the common Food of Christians, nor the daily Nourishment of the Saints. The Word of God, and the Grace of Christ in the Promises is our daily Support, and the constant Nourishment of our Souls. Cordials are not given for our daily Nourishment in the Life of Grace.*

**CAUTION 3.** *However great and rapturous these Foretastes may be, let us not so depend on them as to neglect the more substantial*

*tial and solid Evidence for Heaven, and those Steps of Preparation which I have elsewhere mention'd. Let not those who have enjoy'd them give a Loose to their Souls, and let go their Watchfulness, or neglect their daily Mortification and Diligence in every Duty. Some of these divine Raptures have sometimes been so nearly counterfeited by Raptures of Fancy, by warm Self-love, or perhaps by the Deceit of evil Angels, that they are not so safe a Foundation for our Dependence and assured Hope, as the Soul's Experience of a sincere Repentance, and general Turn of Heart to God, and Mortification of Sin, and delight in every Practice of Holiness. The Devil sometimes has transform'd himself into an Angel of Light, 2 Cor. xi. 14. And there have been some who at first hearing of the Gospel have had wondrous Raptures, Heb. vi. 4. 'tis said, they have tasted of the Powers of the World to come, &c. — who have yet fallen away again, and having lost all their Sense and Savour of divine Things, have become vile Apostates.*

**CAUTION 4.** *If you seem to enjoy any of these affectionate and rapturous Foretastes of Heaven, be jealous of the Truth of them, if they have not a proportionable sanctifying Influence upon your Souls and your Actions.*



**DISC.** If you find they incline you to Negligence in Duty, to Coldness in the common Practises of Religion and Godliness, if they make you fancy that common Ordinances are a low and needless Dispensation, if they seem to excuse you from Diligence in the common Duties of Life towards Man, or Religion towards God, there is great reason then to suspect them: There is danger lest they should be mere Suggestions and deceitful Workings either of your own natural Passions, or the crafty Snare of the artful and busy Adversary of Souls, on purpose to make you neglect solid Religion, and make you part with what is substantial for a bright and flashy Glimpse of heavenly Things.

But, on the other hand, if you find that these special Favours and Enjoyments raise your Hearts to a greater Nearness to God, and more constant Converse with him; if they keep you deep in Humility, and in everlasting Dependance on the Grace of Christ in the Gospel, and warm and zealous Attendance on the Ordinances of Worship; if they teach and incline you to fulfill every Duty of Love to your Neighbour, and particularly to your Fellow-Christians, then they appear to be the *Fruits of the Spirit*; and as they fit you for every Duty and every Providence here upon Earth, there is very good reason to hope they are real Visits from Heaven; and are sent from the God of all Grace.

to make you *partakers* for the heavenly *Glories* **DISC.**

**XX**

*These are the four* **DISC.** *These are the four* **DISC.** *These are the four*

*These are the four* **DISC.** *These are the four* **DISC.** *These are the four*

*First, In Heaven there is a near* **DISC.** *First, In Heaven there is a near* **DISC.** *First, In Heaven there is a near*

*In Heaven the blessed Inhabitants* **DISC.** *In Heaven the blessed Inhabitants* **DISC.** *In Heaven the blessed Inhabitants*

*to*

*Sorrows*

**DESCEND** Standard: the Joy of this Life, all the  
**X** Business and Necessities of it have been for-  
 gotten for a Season, all things below and  
 beneath God have seem'd as nothing in your  
 Eyes? All the Grandeurs and Splendors of  
 Mortality have been buried in Darkness and  
 Oblivion, and Creatures have, as it were,  
 vanished from the Thoughts and been lost,  
 as the Stars disappear at the rising Sun  
 and are no more seen? Have you never seen  
 the Face of God in his sublime Grandeur,  
 Excellence, and Majesty so as to shrink into  
 the Dust before him, and lie low at his Feet  
 with humblest Adoration? And you have  
 been transported into a feeling Acknowledg-  
 ment of your own Nothingness in the Pre-  
 sence of God. Such a Sight the Prophet  
*Isaiah* seem'd to have enjoy'd. *Is. lx. 12, 13.*  
*Behold the Nations before him are as the*  
*Drop of the Bucket, and as the small Dust*  
*of the Balance, he taketh up the Isles as a*  
*vanity, and things.* All Nations before him are  
 as nothing, they are counted to him less than  
 nothing and Vanity.  
 When the Lips are not only directed to  
 speak this sublime Language, but the Soul,  
 as it were, beholds God in these Heights  
 of transcendent Majesty, it is overwhelm-  
 ed with blessed Wonder and surprising De-  
 light, even while it adores in most profound  
 Lowliness and Self-Abasement. This is the  
 Emblem of the Worship of the heavenly  
 World,



World, see Rev. iv. 10. where the Elders, **DISC.**  
 Saints and Prophets, Martyrs, Angels, and  
 Dominions, and Principalities of the highest  
 Degree *cast down their Crowns* at the Foot of  
 him that made them, and exalt God in his  
 Supremacy over all.

2. In Heaven there are such blessed and  
 extensive Surveys of the *infinite Knowledge of*  
*God*, and his amazing *Wisdom* discover'd in  
 his Works, as makes even all their own hea-  
 venly Improvements in Knowledge and Un-  
 derstanding to appear as mere Ignorance,  
 Darkness, and Folly before him. In such  
 an Hour as this is the holy *Angels* may  
*charge themselves with Folly* in his Sight, as  
 he beholds them in the Imperfection of their  
 Understanding. Now have you never been  
 carried away in your Meditations of the all-  
 comprehensive Knowledge of God to such a  
 degree, as to lose and abandon all your for-  
 mer Pride and Appearances of Knowledge and  
 Wisdom in all the native and acquired Riches  
 of it, and count them all as nothing in his  
 Sight? Have you never looked upward to  
 the midnight Skies, and with Amazement  
 sent your Thoughts upward to him who  
*calls all the Stars by their Names*, and brings  
 them forth in all their sparkling Glories, who  
 marshals them in their mighty Ranks and  
 Orders, and then stood overwhelmed with  
 sacred Astonishment at the Wisdom which  
 made and ranged them all in their proper  
 Situations,

**DISC.** Situations, and there appointed them to fill  
 I. fill ten thousand useful Purposes, and that  
 not only towards this little Ball of Earth,  
 but to a Multitude of upper planetary Worlds.  
 Have you never enquired into the Wonders  
 of his Wisdom in framing the Bodies, the  
 Limbs, and the Senses of Millions of Ani-  
 mals, Birds, and Beasts, Fishes, and Insects,  
 as well as Men all around this Globe, and  
 who hath framed all their Organs and Pow-  
 ers of Nature with exquisite Skill, to see and  
 hear, to run and fly, and swim, to produce  
 their Young in all their proper Forms and  
 Sizes, furnished with their various Powers,  
 and to feed and nourish them in their in-  
 numerable Shapes and Colours, admirable  
 for Strength and Beauty? And have you not  
 felt your Souls filled with devout Adoration  
 at the unspeakable and infinite Contrivances  
 of a God?

And not only his *Works of Creation*, but  
 of his *Providence* too have afforded some-  
 pious Souls such devout Amazement. What  
 astonishing Wisdom must that be which has  
 created Mankind on Earth near six thousand  
 Years ago, and by his divine Word in every  
 Age continues to create them or give them  
 Being, with all the same natural Powers and  
 Parts, Beauties and Excellencies! That he  
 hath wisely governed so many Millions of  
 Animals with living Souls or Spirits in them,  
 so many Millions of intelligent Creatures,  
 induced

indued with a free Will of their own to choose or refuse what they will or will not do, and hath managed this innumerable Company of Beings in all Ages, notwithstanding all their different and clashing Opinions and Customs, their crossing Humours, Wills and Passions in endless Variety, and yet hath made them all subservient to his own comprehensive Designs and Purposes thro' all Ages of the World and all Nations on Earth! What unconceivable *Wisdom* is that which hath effectually appointed them all to center in the Accomplishment of his own eternal Counsels! and with what overwhelming Amazement will this Scene appear, when he shall shut up the Theatre of this Earth and fold up these Heavens as a Curtain, and this visible Structure of Things shall be laid in Ashes? What an astonishing View must this be of the all-surveying *Knowledge*, all-comprehending *Wisdom* of a God, and with what holy and humble Pleasure must the pious Soul be filled who takes in and enjoys this Scene of infinite Varieties and Wonders? How near doth such an Hour approach to the Bliss of Heaven and the Raptures of Contemplation, which belong to the blessed Inhabitants of it?

3. I might add something of the *Almighty Power* of God in his Creation and Government of the World, in his Kingdoms of *Nature* and *Providence*. Did not the Angels

rejoice

rejoice



**P190** Rejoice at the Birth-Day of this Universe; and whose Morning Stars shout for joy at the first Appearance of this Creation? And what the Inhabitants of Heaven make their Song, may not a holy Soul be entertained with it, even to Extacy and Rapture? I behold, says he, in divine Meditation, I behold this huge Structure of the Universe rising out of nothing at the Voice of his Command: I behold the several Planets in their various Orders set a moving by the same Word of Power. With what delightful Surprise do I hear him pronouncing the Words, *Let there be Light*, and, lo the Light appears? Let there be Earth and Seas; let there be Clouds and Heavens; let there be Sun, Moon, and Stars, and lo the Heavens, and the dry Land, and the Waters appear, the Clouds and the Stars in their various Order and Situation, and all the Parts of the Creation arise, all replenished with proper Ornaments and Animals according to his Word. At his Command Nature exists in all its Regions with all its Furniture; the Beasts, and Birds, and Fishes in all their Forms arise, and at once they obey the several almighty Orders he gave, and by the unknown and unconceivable Force of such a Word they leap out into Existence in ten thousand Forms.

Again, what divine Pleasure is it to hear a God beginning the Work of his Providence, and speaking those wondrous Words  
of

of Power in every Plant and Animal,  and in every Part of the Earth, and in every Succession of our fix thousand Years, the Earth has been cover'd all over with Herbs and Plants, with Shrubs and all Trees in all their Beauty and Diverſity. The Air hath been fill'd with Birds and Insects, the Seas and Rivers with Fish, and the dry Land with Beasts, and Men even to this present Day. When all this Philosophy is changed into Devotion, it must also be transform'd into divine and unutterable Joy.

Nor are these things too low and mean for the Contemplation of heavenly Beings: for God is seen in all of them: there is not a Spire of Grass but the Power and Wisdom of a God are visible therein. And it is certain the heavenly Beings must be sometimes employ'd in the Contemplation of many of these lower Wonders. The Plants and Beasts in desolate Regions where no Man inhabits, and in distant and foreign Oceans and Rivers, where the fishy Shoals in all their Variety and Numbers, in all their Successions and Generations for near six thousand Years were never seen nor known by any of the Sons of Men; these seem to have been created in vain, if no heavenly Beings are acquainted with them; nor raise a Revenue of Glory to him that made them.

This

**DISC.** *And* *that* *by* *Power* *therefore* *which*  
*sustains* *this* *Universe* *which* *sustains* *the*  
*Frame* *of* *it* *every* *Moment* *and* *secures* *it*  
*from* *dissolving* *this* *Power* *which* *brings*  
*with* *the* *Stars* *in* *their* *Order* *and* *Worms*  
*and* *Creeper* *Things* *in* *their* *innumerable*  
*Millions* *and* *governs* *all* *the* *Motions* *of*  
*them* *to* *the* *Purposes* *of* *divine* *Glory* *must*  
*needs* *afford* *a* *contemplative* *Soul* *with* *Rap-*  
*tures* *of* *pleasing* *Meditation* *and* *in* *these*  
*serene* *Meditations* *by* *the* *Aids* *of* *the* *di-*  
*vine* *Spirit* *a* *Soul* *on* *Earth* *may* *get* *nearer* *to*  
*Heaven*. *And* *with* *what* *religious* *and* *un-*  
*known* *Pleasure* *at* *such* *a* *Season* *doth* *it*  
*shrink* *its* *own* *Being* *as* *it* *were* *into* *an* *Atom*;  
*and* *lie* *in* *the* *Dust* *and* *adore*!

4. *The All-sufficiency of the great God to form and to supply every Creature with all that it can want or desire* is another Perfection of the divine Nature, which is better known in Heaven than it ever was here on Earth, and affords another Scene of Astonishment and sacred Delight: and there may be some Advances towards this Pleasure found among Saints below, some first Fruits of this heavenly Felicity and Joy in the All-sufficiency of God.

My whole self, Body and Mind, is from God and from him alone. All my Limbs and Powers of Flesh and Spirit were derived from him, and borrow'd their first Existence from their original Pattern in his fruitful Mind.





**D**ISC. Nature, and without him there is nothing there. **X** ~~there can be nothing, all Nature without him would have been a perpetual Blank, an universal Emptiness, and everlasting Void; and with one Turn of his Will, he could sink and dissolve all Nature into its original Nothing.~~

Confess, O my Soul, thy own Nothingness in his Presence, and with adoring Pleasure and Worship adore his Fulness: he is thy everlasting All, thy Dependence ever fixed upon him; thou canst not, thou shalt not live a Moment without him, without this habitual Dependence, and a frequent delightful Acknowledgment of it. Such a devout Frame as this is Heaven, and such Scenes now and then passing thro' the Soul are Glimpfes of the heavenly Blessedness.

### SECTION III.

Though the *Eternity* and *Immensity* of God might perhaps in their own Nature, and in the reason of things, be first mention'd, yet his *Majesty*, his *Power*, and his *Wisdom* in their sovereign Excellency strike the Souls of Creatures more immediately, therefore I have put these first. However, let us now consider the *Eternity* of the great God and his *Omnipresence*, and think how the Spirits in Heaven are affected therewith, and what kindred Meditations may be deriv'd

leaved from these Perfections by the subtle Diabol.  
here on Earth. I pressed therefore, *or*

his infinite Firmity of God: Which the

the most exalted Spirit in Heaven cannot  
comprehend, yet its probable they have

been nearer and clearer Discovery of it than

we can have here in this mortal State, while

we dwell in Flesh and Blood. We have no-

thing in this visible World that gives us so

much as an Example or Similitude of it.

The great God *who is, who was, and who is*

*to come thro' all Ages, he is, and was, and*

*for ever will be the same.* Let us go back

as many thousand Ages as we can in our

Thoughts, and still an eternal God was be-

fore them, a Being that had no Beginning

of his Existence, nor will have any End of

his Life or Duration. And as he says to

Moses, *My Name is I AM THAT I AM*, so

as there is nothing which had any Hand in

his Being, but all the Reasons of it are de-

rived from his own Self-fulness, therefore

we may say of him that *he is because he is,*

and because *he will be*: He had no Spring

of his first Beginning, nor any Cause of his

continued Existence, but what is within him-

self. We can never set ourselves in too mean

a Light when an eternal God is near us;

and every thing besides God can be but little

in our Eyes.

And, O my thinking Powers, are ye not

sweetly lost in this holy Rapture, and over-

power'd



DISC. power'd with divine Pleasure, O my Soul

K. in such Meditation as this? Art thou not  
 delightfully surpris'd with the Thoughts of  
 such Self-sufficiency and such an unconceiv-  
 able Perfection? Thy Being consider'd as  
 here in this Life, is not so in the Sight  
 of God as an Atom in comparison of the  
 whole Earth; and even the supposed future  
 Ages of thy Existence in the eternal State  
 are unconceivably short, when compared  
 with the Glory of that Being that never be-  
 gan his Life or his Duration.

Many things here on Earth concur to-  
 wards my Satisfaction and Peace, but if I  
 have God my Friend, I have all in him that  
 I can possibly want or desire. Let me then  
 live no longer upon Creatures when God  
 is All.

Let Sun, Moon, and Stars vanish, and all  
 this visible Creation disappear and be for ever  
 annihilated if God please, he himself is still  
 my eternal Hope and never-failing Spring of  
 all my Blessedness: My Expectations are con-  
 tinually safe in his Hands, and shall never fail  
 while I am so near to him. This is *Joy un-  
 speakable*, and akin to *Glory*.

6. Let us meditate also on the *Immensify*  
 of God, which I think is much better ex-  
 pressed by his *Omnipresence*. God is where-  
 soever any Creature is or can be; knowing  
 immediately by his own Presence all that  
 belongs to them, all that they are or can be,

all that they do or can do, all that concerns

DISC.

them, whether their Sins or their Virtues,

X

their Pains or their Pleasures, their Hopes

or their Fears. By implication also, that he doth

by his immediate Power and Influence sup-

port and govern all the Creatures. In short,

this *Imagery* is nothing else but the infinite

Extent of his Knowledge and his Power,

and it reaches to and beyond all Places, as

Duration reaches to and beyond all Time.

This the Blessed above know and rejoice in,

and take infinite Satisfaction therein; hav-

ing God as it were surrounding them on all

sides, so that they cannot be where he is

not, he is ever present with his *All-sufficiency*

ready to bestow on them all they wish or

desire while he continues their God, *i. e.* for

ever and ever. They are under the Blessing

of his Eye, and the Care of his Hand, to

guard them from every Evil, and to secure

their Peace.

Let thy Flesh or Spirit be surrounded with

never so many thousand Dangers or Enemies,

they cannot do thee the least Damage without

his leave by Force or by Surprise while such

an almighty Being is all around thee; nor

hast thou reason to indulge any fear while the

Spring and Ocean of all Life, Activity, and

Blessedness thus secures thee on every side.

If thou hast the Evidences of his Children

on thee, thou possessest an eternal Security

of thy Peace.

DISC.

X.

The Sovereignty and Dominion of the blessed God is a further Meditation and Pleasure which becomes and adorns the Inhabitants of the heavenly World. There he reigns upon the Throne of his Glory, and the greater part of the Territories which are subject to him are less in their View than our scanty Powers of Nature or Perception can now apprehend, and a proportionable degree of Pleasure is found with the Saints above in these Contemplations.

But in our present State of Mortality our Souls can only look thro' these Lattices of Flesh and Blood, and make a few scanty and imperfect Inferences from what they always see, and hear, and feel: and yet the glorious Sovereignty and Dominion of the blessed God may so penetrate the Soul with a divine Sense of it here on Earth as to raise up a Heaven of Wonder and Joy within.

Adore him, O my Soul, who surveys and rules all things which he has made with an absolute Authority, and is for ever uncontrollable. How righteous a thing is it that he should give Laws to all the Beings which his Hand hath formed, which his Breath hath spoken into Life, and especially that Rank which his Favour hath furnished with Immortality? How just that he should be obey'd by every Creature without the least Reluctance or Reserve, without a Moment's Delay.



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 Daily, and that to all the Length of their  
 Existence, in which I must not be a  
 Giver of Pain, but a Giver of Pleasure.  
 O my Nature, shouldst thou be the Powers of  
 Soul and Body to everlasting Continence, to  
 do what ever I require, and to be what  
 I will for ever. Wilt thou have me O  
 Lord, be that Superior or Fall, wilt thou  
 have me languish under Weakness and Con-  
 fustion? Here at thy Foot, I am for ever  
 at thy Disposal, wilt thou have me active  
 and vigorous in thy Service? Lord, I am  
 ready with utmost Cheerfulness. Wilt thou  
 confine me to painful Idleness and long Pa-  
 tience? Lord here I am, do with me what  
 seemeth good unto thee. I am ready to  
 serve thy Purposes here, or thy Orders in  
 the unknown World of Spirits when thou  
 shalt dissolve this mortal Frame. I lay down  
 these Limbs in the Dust of Death at thy  
 Command. I venture into the Regions of  
 Angels and unbodied Minds at thy Sum-  
 mons. I will be what thou wilt, I will go  
 when thou wilt, I will dwell where thou  
 wilt, for thou art always with me, and I  
 am entirely thine. I both rejoice and trem-  
 ble at thy Sovereignty and Dominion over  
 all. God cannot do Injury to a Creature  
 who is so intirely his own Property. God  
 will not deal unkindly with a Creature who  
 is so sensible of his just Dominion and Su-  
 premacy, and which bows at the Foot of







**DISC.** polluted Creatures as we are should ever be admitted into his Presence to make the least Approaches to his Majesty, or to hope for his Favour?

Besides, in this sublime View of the *linefs* of God, we shall not only love God better than ever, as we see him more amiable under this View of his glorious Attributes, but we shall grow more sincere and fervent in our Love to all that is holy, to every *Tru* Christian, to every Saint in Heaven and on Earth: We shall not see any Estrangedness or Alienation from those who have so much of the Likeness of God in them. They will ever appear to be the *Excellent of the Earth, in whom it is our delight*: Their supposed Blemishes will vanish at the Thought of their Likeness to God in Holiness: And especially our blessed Lord *Jesus*, the Son of God, will be more precious and all-glorious in our Eyes, as he is the most perfect Image of his Father's Holiness. There is nothing in the blessed God, but the Man *Christ Jesus* bears a proportionable Resemblance to it, as far as a Creature can resemble God, and he will consequently be highest in our Esteem under God the Lord and Father of all.

9. The ever-pleasing Attribute of divine *Goodness and Love* is another endless and joyful Theme or Object of the Contemplation of the heavenly World. There this Perfection

fection shines in our bright eyes, more to  
displays the most triumphant Glories, and  
kindles a Flame of everlasting joy in all the  
Sons of Blessedness.

-But we in this World may have such  
Glimpses of this Goodness and Love as may  
fill the Soul with unspeakable Pleasure, and  
begin to desire the full Fruits and Earnest of  
Heaven. When we survey the inexhaustible  
Ocean of Goodness which is in God, which  
fills and supplies all the Creatures with every  
thing they stand in need of, when we be-  
hold all the Tribes of the Sons of Men sup-  
ported by his boundless Sufficiency, his  
Bounty and kind Providence, and refreshed  
with a thousand Comforts beyond what the  
mere Necessities of Nature require. In such  
an Hour if we feel the least Flowings of  
Goodness in ourselves towards others, we  
shall humble ourselves to the Dust, and cry  
out in holy Amazement, Lord, what is an  
Atom to a Mountain? What is a Drop to a  
River, a Sea of Beneficence? What is a  
Shadow to the eternal Substance? What  
good thing is there in Time or in Eternity,  
which I can possibly want which is not  
abundantly supply'd out of thine overflow-  
ing Fulness? Hence arises the eternal Sa-  
tisfaction of all the holy and happy Elec-  
tion in being so near to thee, and under the  
everlasting Assurances of thy Love. I can  
do nothing but fall down before thee in  
deepest

DISC.

deepest Humility, and admit, adore, and eternally love those who have assumed to manifest the Name of Love. John 15. 8. *God is Love.*

SECTION IV.

Thus far our Love may rise into an imitation of the Love above in the devout Contemplation of divine Perfections.

And not only the Perfections of God considered and survey'd single in themselves, but the Union and blessed Harmony of many of them in the divine Works and Transactions of Providence and of Grace, especially in the Gospel of Christ, administer further Matter for Contemplation and Pleasure among the happy Spirits in Heaven: And so far as this Enjoyment may be communicated to the Saints here on Earth, they may be also said to have a Foretaste of the Business and Pleasure of Heaven. Let us take notice of this Harmony in several Instances.

I. In the sacred Constitution of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Man united in one personal Agent: Here Majesty and Mercy give a glorious Instance of their Union, here all the Grandeur and Dignity of Godhead condescends to join itself in union with a Creature, such as Man is, a Spirit dwelling in Flesh and Blood.

1 Tim.

1 Tim.



*1 Tim. ii. 5. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, even the Man Christ Jesus. But this Man is personally united with the blessed God, He is God manifest in the Flesh: He is a Man in whom dwells all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily, to constitute one all-sufficient Saviour of miserable and fallen Mankind: What an amazing Stoop or Condescension is this for the eternal God-head thus to join itself to a Creature, and what a surprizing Elevation is this of the Creature for the Man Christ Jesus thus to be assumed into so near a Relation to the blessed God? All the Glories that result from this divine Contrivance and Transaction are not to be remunerated in Paper, nor by the best Capacity of Writers here on Earth: The heavenly Inhabitants are much better acquainted with them.*

*Again, here is an Example of the Harmony and Co-operation of unsearchable Wisdom and all-commanding Power in the Person of the blessed Jesus; and what a happy Design is hereby executed, namely, the Reconciliation of sinful Man and the holy and glorious God: and who could do this but one who was possessed of such Wisdom and such Power? When there was no Creature in Heaven or Earth sufficient for this Work, God was pleased to appoint such a Union between a Creature and the Creator, between God and Man, as might answer*

**DISE** C. When all things are conceivable Purposes con-  
 cealed in his Thought. If there be such

**X.** *is a Person fit to execute any of his infi-*  
*nite Designs, he will not be frustrated for*  
*want of an Agent, he will appoint God and*  
*Man to be so closely united as to become*  
*one Agent to execute this Design, no qualifi-*  
*cation in the Mind of our Satisfaction, (viz)*  
*by an atonement for Sin.* *The great God*  
*did not think it proper, nor agreeable to his*  
*sublime Holiness, to receive sinful Man into*  
*his Favour without an Atonement for Sin,*  
*and a Satisfaction made to the Governor of*  
*the World for the Abuse and Violation of his*  
*holy Law here on Earth; and therefore he*  
*appointed such a Sacrifice of Atonement as*  
*might be sufficient to do complete honour*  
*to the Lawgiver, as well as to save and de-*  
*liver the Offender from Death: Therefore*  
*Jesus was made a Man capable of suffering*  
*and dying, that he might honour the Ma-*  
*jesty and the Justice of the broken Law of*  
*God, and that he might do it completely*  
*by the Union of Godhead to this Man and*  
*Mediator; the Dignity of whose Divinity*  
*diffuses itself over all that he did and all that*  
*he suffer'd, so as to make his Obedience*  
*completely acceptable to God instead of*  
*thousands of Creatures, and fully satisfac-*  
*tory for the Offence that was given him by*  
*them; here is a Sacrifice provided equal to*  
*all the sins of all the world, and therefore the*

the Guilt of Sin, and therefore sufficient to take it away. *II.* You see here what a blessed Harmony there is between the Justice of God doing Honour to his own Law, and his Compassion resolved to save a ruined Creature: Here is no Blemish cast upon the strict Justice and Righteousness of God, when the Offender is forgiven in such a Method as may do Honour to Justice and Mercy at once. Rom. iii. 24, 25. *We are justify'd freely by his Grace thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation thro' Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness, even his perfect governing Justice, tho' he pass by and pardons the Sins of a thousand criminal Creatures; to declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness, that he might appear to be just to his own Authority and Law, while he justifies the sinful Man who believeth or trusteth in Jesus the Mediator as becoming a proper Sacrifice and Propitiation for Sin.*

*III.* By the Sanctification of our Nature. There is also another remarkable Harmony between the Holiness of God and his Mercy in this Work of the Salvation of sinful Man. The Guilt of Sin is not only to be forgiven and taken away by a complete Atonement and Sacrifice, but the sinful Nature of this ruin'd Creature is to be changed into Holiness, is to be renewed and sanctify'd by the blessed Spirit,



**DISC.** Spirit, and reformed into the Image of God his Maker: He must not only be released from Punishment by Forgiveness, but he must be restor'd to the Image of God by Sanctifying Grace; that is, he may be in Company for the rest of the Favourites of God in the upper World; that he may be qualify'd to be admitted into this Society, where perfect Purity and Holiness are necessary for all the Inhabitants of this upper World, and for such near Attendants on the blessed God: In that happy State nothing shall enter there that defileth, Rev. xii. 17. and therefore concerning the Criminals amongst the *Corinthians*, as vile and as offensive to the pure and holy God as they are represented, 1 Cor. vi. 9-11. (VIZ.) Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, Drunkards, &c. but, 'tis said, they are wash'd, but they are sanctify'd, but they are justify'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Now when the Souls of the Saints here on Earth are rais'd to such divine Contemplations, what transporting Satisfaction and Delight must arise from the surprising Union and Harmony of the Attributes of the blessed God in these his Transactions! And especially when the Soul in the lively Exercise of Grace and View of its own Pardon, Justification, and restored Holiness, looks upon itself as one of these happy Favourites of

of the Majesty of Heaven. It cries out as it were in holy Amazement, What a divine Profusion of Wisdom and Power, Glory and Grace, to save a wretched Worm from everlasting Burnings, and to advance a mortal Rebel to such undeserved and exalted Glories!

## SECTION V.

*The Wonders of divine Perfections, united in the Success of the Gospel* give an Ecstasy of Joy sometimes to holy Souls. Not only do these Views of the united Perfections of God, as they are concerned in the Contrivance of the Gospel, entertain the Saints above with new and pleasurable Contemplations, but the Wonders of divine Wisdom, Power, and Grace, united and harmonizing in the Propagation and Success of this Gospel, become a Matter of delightful Attention and Survey to the Saints on high.

This is imitated also in a measure by the Children of God here on Earth. Have you never felt such a surprizing Pleasure in the View of the Attributes of God, his Grace, Wisdom, and Power in making these divine Designs so happily efficacious for the good of thousands of Souls? If there be joy in Heaven among the Angels of God at the Conversion of a Sinner, what perpetual Messengers of unknown Satisfaction and Delight

DISC. did the daily and constant Labours of this  
 X blessed Apostle Paul send to the upper Worlds

What perpetual Tidings were carried to the Worlds on high of such and such Souls, converted unto God from gross Idolatry, from the Worship of dumb Idols, from the vain Superstition of their Heroes and Mediators Gods, and from the impure and bloody Sacrifices of their own Countrymen, whereby they intended to satisfy their Gods for their own Iniquities, and to reconcile themselves to these invented Gods, these Demons or Devils which were deify'd by the Folly and Madness of sinful Men? What new *Hallelujahs* must it put into the Mouths of the Saints and Angels on high, to see the true and living God worshipped by thousands that had never before known him, and to see Jesus the Mediator in all the Glories of his divine Offices admired and adored by those who lately had either known nothing of him, or been shameful Revilers and Blasphe-mers of his Majesty?

And what an unknown Delight is diffused thro' many of the Saints of God now here on Earth upon such Tidings, not only from the foreign and *Heathen* Countries, but even some that have profess'd *Christianity*, but under gross Mistakes and miserable Fogs of Darkness and Superstition? What an unconceivable and overwhelming Pleasure has surprized a *Christian* sometimes in



the midst of his zealous Worship of God **DISC.**  
and his Saints, to hear of such Tidings of **X**  
new Subjects in multitudes submitting them-  
selves to their divine Dominion. **W**  
and even in our day, whenever we hear  
of the Work of Grace begun by the Mini-  
stry of the Word, awaking a drowsy and  
lathargic Soul from its dangerous Sleep on  
the Brink of Hell, rousing a negligent and  
lothart Creature from his Indolence and  
Carelessness about the Things of Eternity;  
or again, in making a Heart soft and im-  
pressive to the Powers of divine Grace, which  
was before hard as the nether Millstone; and  
especially when multitudes of these Tidings  
come together from distant Places, as of late  
we have heard from *New England*, and se-  
veral of those Plantations, from *Scotland* and  
several of her Assemblies, what additional  
Scenes of heavenly Joy and Pleasure have  
been raised amongst the pious Souls, both  
those who relate and those who hear them.

## SECTION VI.

Foretastes of Heaven are sometimes de-  
rived from *the overflowing Sense of the Love*  
*of God* let in upon the Soul.

The Spirits above who are surrounded  
with this Blessedness and this Love, and re-  
joice in the everlasting Assurance of it, can-  
not but be filled with intense Joy. What

DISC. can be a greater Foundation of complete  
 X. Blessedness and Delight than the immediate  
*Sensation and Assurance of being beloved*  
*by the glorious, and supreme, and the All-*  
*sufficient Being, who will never suffer his*  
 Favourites to want any thing, he can bestow  
 upon them to make them happy in Perfec-  
 tion, and for ever? All Creatures are under  
 his present View and immediate Command;  
 there is not the least of them can give Dis-  
 turbance to any of the Favourites of Hea-  
 ven, who dwell in the midst of their Crea-  
 tor's Love; nor is there any Creature that  
 can be employ'd towards the complete Hap-  
 piness of the Saints on high, but is for ever  
 under the Disposal of that God who has  
 made all Things, and it shall be employ'd  
 upon every just Occasion for the Display of  
 his Love to his Saints.

Some have imagined that that *perfect Sa-*  
*tisfaction of Soul which arises from a good*  
*Conscience, speaking peace inwardly in the*  
*Survey of its sincere desire to please God in*  
*all things, and having with Uprightness of*  
*Heart fulfilled its Duty,* is the supreme De-  
 light of Heaven: but 'tis my Opinion God  
 has never made the Felicity of his Creatures  
 to be drawn so intirely out of themselves, or  
 from the Spring of their own Bosom, as this  
 Notion seems to imply. God himself will  
 be *all in all* to his Creatures; and all their  
 original Springs of Blessedness as well as Be-

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ing are in him, and must be derived from him: 'Tis therefore the overflowing Sense of being beloved by a God almighty and eternal, that is the supreme Fountain of Joy and Blessedness to every reasonable Nature, and the endless Security of this Happiness is Joy everlasting in all the Regions of the Blessed above.

DISC.

X.

Now a Taste of this kind is heavenly Blessedness even on this Earth, where God is pleased to bestow it on his Creatures; and the Glimpes of it bring such Ecstacies into the Soul as can hardly be conceived, or revealed to others, but it is best felt by them who enjoy it.

SECTION VII.

*Foretastes of Heaven in the fervent Emotions of Soul in love to Jesus Christ.*

What the Love and strong Affections of the blessed Saints above towards Jesus Christ their Lord and Saviour may impress of Joy on their Spirits, is not possible for us to learn in the present State; but there are some who have even here on Earth felt such transcendent Affections to Jesus the Son of God, even tho' they have never enjoy'd the Sight of him, yet they love him with most intense and ardent Zeal; their Devotion almost swallows them up and carries them away Captive above all earthly Things, and brings them



**DESC** them near to the heavenly World. There is an unknown Joy which arises from such intense Love to an Object so lovely and so deserving. Such is that which is spoken concerning the Saints to whom St. Peter writes, 1 Pet. i. 8. *whom having not seen, ye love, in whom tho' now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory.* It is thro' this divine Taste of Love, and Joy, and Glory communicated by the blessed Spirit, revealing the Things of *Christ* to their Souls, that many of the Confessors and Martyrs in the primitive Ages, and in later Times, have not only joyfully parted with all their Possessions and their Comforts in this Life, but have follow'd the Call of God thro' Prisons and Deaths of a most dreadful Kind, thro' Racks, and Fires, and many Torments, for the sake of the Love of *Jesus*; and perhaps there may be some in our day who have had so lively and strong a Sensation of the Love of *Christ* let in upon their Souls, that they could not only be content to be absent from all their carnal Delights for ever, but even from their intellectual and more spiritual Entertainments, if they might be for ever placed in such a Situation to *Jesus Christ*, as to feel the everlasting Beams of his Love let out upon them, and to rejoice in him with perpetual Delight. As he is the nearest Image of God the Father, they can love nothing beneath

beneath God equal to their Love of him, **DISC.**  
 nor delight in any thing beneath God equal **X.**  
 to their Delight in *Jesus Christ*. Indeed their  
 Love and their Joy are so wrapp'd up in the  
 great and blessed God as he appears in *Christ*  
*Jesus*, that they do not usually divide their  
 Affections in this matter, but love God su-  
 preinely for ever, as revealing himself in his  
 most perfect Love in *Christ Jesus* unto their  
 Souls. How near this may approach to the  
 glorify'd Love of the Saints in Heaven, or  
 what Difference there is between the holy  
 Ones above and the Saints below in this re-  
 spect, may be hard to say.

## SECTION VIII.

*Foretastes of Heaven in the transcendent  
 Love of the Saints to each other.* I might  
 here ask some advanced Saints,

Have you never seen or heard of a Fellow-  
 Christian growing into such a near Resem-  
 blance to the blessed *Jesus*, in all the Vir-  
 tues and Graces of the Spirit, that you would  
 willingly part with all the Attainments and  
 Honours that you have already arrived at,  
 which make you never so eminent in the  
 World or in the Church, as to be made so  
 near a Conformist to the Image of the blef-  
 sed *Jesus* as this Fellow-Christian has seem-  
 ed to be?

**DISC.** Have you never seen or read of the Glories and Graces of the Son of God exemplify'd in some of the Saints in so high a degree, and at the same time been so divested of Self, and so mortify'd to a narrow Self-love, as to be satisfy'd with the lowest and the meanest Supports of Life, and the meanest Station in the Church of Christ here on Earth; if you might but be favour'd to partake of that transcendent Likeness to the holy *Jesus*, as you would fain imitate and possess?

Have you never had a View of all the Virtues and Graces of the Saints, derived from one eternal Fountain the blessed God, and flowing thro' the Mediation of *Jesus* his Son in so glorious a manner, that you have longed for the Day when you shall be amongst them, and receive your Share of this Blessedness? Have you never found yourself so united to them in one Heart and one Soul, that you have wished them all the same Blessings that you wish'd to yourself, and that without the least Shadow of Grudging or Envy, if every one of them were Partaker as much as you? There is no Envy among the heavenly Inhabitants; nor doth St. *Paul* receive the less because *Cephas* or *Apollos* has a large Share. Every Vessel has its Capacity enlarged to a proper Extent by the God of Nature and Grace, and every Vessel is completely filled, and feels itself  
for



for ever full and for ever happy: then there cannot be found the Shadow of Envy amongst them.

DISC.  
X.

Now to such up the View of these things in short; who is there that enjoys these blessed Evidences of an Interest in the Inheritance on high, who is there that has any such Foretastes of the Felicity above, but must join with the whole Creation in groaning for that great Day, when all the Children of God shall appear in the Splendor of their Adoption, and every thing in Nature and Grace among them shall attain the proper End for which it was at first design'd. And whensoever any such Christian hears some of the last Words in the Bible pronounced by our Lord Jesus, *surely I come quickly*, he must immediately join the universal Echo of the Saints with unspeakable Delight, *Even so come, O Lord Jesus.*

Dis.

for ever full and for ever happy: then there DISC  
cannot be found the Shadow of Bury a- X.

# DISCOURSE XI

Now to turn to the View of those things  
in short; who is there that enjoys those  
blessed Privileges of an Interest in the In-  
heritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, who has any  
such I erect the Foundation above, but  
must join with the whole Creation in groan-  
ing for that great Day when all the Children  
of God shall appear in the Splendor of their  
Adoption, and every thing in Nature and  
Creation shall witness their glory in the presence  
of God. For when we consider the state of the  
world, we are struck with the sight of the  
travailing of the Church, and the groaning of  
our Mother, who is in pain, and ready to  
bring forth her children into the world. And  
of the same nature, with unspeakable Delight  
from Heaven, O Lord Jesus, we are a great  
to see it and to hear it.

## BEFORE we proceed to make any Im-DISC proposition, we shall first of all for XI

our present End, we shall necessarily shew  
learth out the true meaning of them. There  
are two general sorts of these three Verses  
which are given by some of the most con-  
siderable Interpreters of Scripture, and they  
are exceeding different from each other.  
The first is this: Some suppose Job un-  
der the Externality of his Anguish to long  
after

# DISCOURSE XI.

Safety in the Grave, and Joy at  
the Resurrection.

JOB XIV. 13, 14, 15.

*O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave,  
that thou wouldst keep me in secret until  
thy Wrath be past, that thou wouldst ap-  
point me a set time and remember me! If  
a Man die shall he live again? All the  
Days of my appointed time will I wait till  
my Change come. Thou shalt call and I  
will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire  
to the Work of thy Hands.*

**B**EFORE we attempt to make any Im-  
provement of these Words of Job for  
our present Edification, 'tis necessary that we  
search out the true Meaning of them. There  
are two general Senses of these three Verses  
which are given by some of the most con-  
siderable Interpreters of Scripture, and they  
are exceeding different from each other.

The first is this. Some suppose Job un-  
der the Extremity of his Anguish to long  
after



**DISC.** after Death here, as he does in some other Parts of this Book, and to desire that God would cut him off from the Land of the Living, and *hide him in the Grave*, or, at least, take him away from the present Stage of Action, and conceal him in some retired and solitary Place, dark as the Grave is, till all the Days which might be design'd for his Pain and Sorrow were finished: And that God would *appoint him a time* for his Restoration to Health and Happiness again in this World, and raise him to the Possession of it, by *calling him out* of that dark and solitary Place of Retreat; and then *Job* would *answer him*, and appear with pleasure at such a Call of Providence.

Others give this Sense of the Words, that tho' the pressing and overwhelming Sorrows of this good Man constrain'd him to long for Death, and he entreated of God that he might be sent to the *Grave as a Hiding-place*, and thus be deliver'd from his present Calamities, yet he had some divine Glimpse of a Resurrection or *living again*, and he hopes for the Happiness of a future State when God should call him out of the Grave. He knew that the blessed God would have *a desire to restore the Work of his own Hands* to Life again, and *Job* would *answer the Call* of his God into a Resurrection with holy Pleasure and Joy.

Now

Now there are four or five *Reasons* which incline me to prefer this latter Sense of the Words, and to shew that the Comforts and Hope which *Job* aspires to in this place are only to be derived from a Resurrection to final Happiness.

1. The express Words of the Text are, *O that thou wouldst bid me in the Grave!* not in a darksome Place like the Grave; and where the literal Sense of the Words is plain and agreeable to the Context, there is no need of making Metaphors to explain them. There is nothing that can encourage us to suppose that *Job* had any hope of Happiness in this World again, after he was gone down to the Grave, and therefore he would not make so unreasonable a Petition to the great God. This seems to be too foolish and too hopeless a Request for us to put into the Mouth of so wise and good a Man.

2. He seems to limit the Continuance of Man in the State of Death to the Duration of the Heavens, ver. 12th, *Man lieth down and riseth not till the Heavens be no more:* not absolutely for ever does *Job* desire to be hidden in the Grave, but till the Dissolution of all these visible Things, these Heavens and this Earth, and the great Rising-day for the Sons of Men. These Words seem to have a plain Aspect towards the Resurrection.

And especially when he adds, *they shall not be waken'd nor raised out of their Sleep.*

The

**DISC.** The *Brave* when dying are never said to *sleep* in Scripture, because they shall never rise again; but this is a frequent Word used to signify the Death of *Man* both in the Old Testament and in the New, because he only lies down in the Grave for a Season, as in a Bed of Sleep, in order to awake and arise hereafter.

3. In other places of this Book *Job* gives us some evident Hints of his Hope of a Resurrection, especially that divine Passage and Prophecy, when he spake as one surrounded with a Vision of Glory, and filled with the Light and the Joy of Faith. *Job* xix. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth: and tho' after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another, tho' my Reins be consumed within me.* But in many parts of this Book the good Man lets us know, that he had no manner of Hope of any Restoration to Health and Peace in this Life. *Job* vii. 6, 7, 8. *My Days are spent without Hope: mine Eye shall no more see good: the Eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine Eyes are upon me, and I am not.* *Vet.* 21. *Now shall I sleep in the Dust, thou shalt seek me in the Morning and I shall not be.* *Job* xvii. 15. *Where is now my Hope? As for my Hope, who shall see it?*

He



VII. II. and Joy at the Resurrection.

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He and his Hope seem'd to go down to the **DISC**  
Bar of the Bar together, and to rest in the **XX**  
Dust. And if Job had no hope of a Resurrection in this World, then his Hope must point to the Resurrection of the Dead.

If we turn these Verses here, as well as that noble Passage in Job xix. to the more evangelical Sense of a Resurrection, the Truths which are contain'd in the one and the other, are all supported by the Language of the New Testament: and the express Words of both these Texts are much more naturally and easily apply'd to the evangelical Sense, without any Strain and Difficulty.

The Expressions in the ninth of Job, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* have been refused by many wise Interpreters from that poor and low Sense which has been forced upon them, by those who will not allow Job to have any Prospect beyond this Life: and it has been made to appear to be a bright Glimpse of divine Light and Joy, a Ray or Vision of the Sun of Righteousness breaking in between the dark Clouds of his pressing Sorrow: And that the Words of my Text demand the same sort of Interpretation, will appear further by these short Remarks, and this Paraphrase upon them.

Job had been speaking, ver. 7, &c. that *there is hope of a Tree when it is cut down that it will sprout again visibly, and bring forth Boughs: but when Man gives up the*  
Ghost,

**DISC.** Ghost, he is no more visible upon Earth.

**II.** *Where is he?* Job does not deny his future Existence, but only intimates that he does not appear in the Place where he was; and in the following Verses he does not say, a dying Man shall never rise, or shall never be ~~awaken'd out of his Sleep~~, but asserts that he rises not till the Dissolution of these ~~Heavens~~ and these visible Things: And by calling Death a Sleep, he supposes an awaking Time, tho' it may be distant and far off.

Then he proceeds to long for Death; *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave! that thou wouldst keep me secret till thy Wrath be past! till these Times and Seasons of Sorrow be ended, which seems to be the Effect of divine Wrath or Anger: But then I intreat thou wouldst appoint me a set time for my tarrying in the Grave, and remember me in order to raise me again.* Then with a sort of Surprize of Faith and Pleasure he adds, *If a Man die shall he live again? Shall these dry Bones live?* And he answers in the Language of Hope: *All the Days of that appointed time of thine I will wait till that glorious Change shall come. Thou shalt call from Heaven, and I will answer thee from the Dust of Death. I will appear at thy Call and say, Here am I: thou wilt have a desire to the Work of thy Hands, to raise me again from the Dead, whom thou hast made of Clay, and fashion'd me into Life.*

From

From the Words thus expounded we may **DISC.**  
draw these several *Observations*, and make a **XL**  
*short Reflection* upon each of them, as we  
pass along.

*Obs. I.* This World is a Place wherein  
good Men are exposed to great Calamities,  
and they are ready to think the Anger or  
Wrath of God appears in them.

*Obs. II.* The Grave is God's known Hid-  
ing-place for his People.

*Obs. III.* God has appointed a set Time in  
his own Counsels for all his Children to con-  
tinue in Death.

*Obs. IV.* The lively View of a happy Re-  
surrection, and a well-grounded Hope of  
this blessed Change, is a solid and divine  
Comfort to the Saints of God, under all  
Trials of every kind both in Life and Death.

*Obs. V.* The Saints of God who are rest-  
ing in their Beds of Dust will arise joyfully  
at the Call of their heavenly Father.

*Obs. VI.* God takes delight in his Works  
of Nature, but much more when they are  
dignify'd and adorned by the Operations of  
divine Grace.



**Disc.** **Obf. VII.** How much are we indebted to  
**Kt.** God for the Revelation of the New Testa-  
 ment, which teaches us to find out the  
 Blessings which are contain'd in the Old,  
 and to fetch out the Glories and Treasures  
 which are concealed there?

Let us dwell a while upon each of these,  
 and endeavour to improve them by a parti-  
 cular Application.

**Obferv. I.** *This World is a Place wherein  
 good Men are exposed to great Calamities,  
 and they are ready to think the Anger or  
 Wrath of God appears in them.* This mor-  
 tal Life and this present State of Things,  
 as furrounded with Crosses and Disappoint-  
 ments, the Loss of our dearest Friends, as  
 well as our own Pains and Sickneses, have  
 so much Anguish and Misery attending  
 them, that they seem to be the Seasons of  
 divine Wrath, and they grieve and pain the  
 Spirit of many a pious Man, under a Sense  
 of the Anger of his God. It must be con-  
 fess'd in general that Misery is the effect of  
 Sin, for Sin and Sorrow came into the  
 World together. It is granted also, that  
 God sometimes *afflicts* his People in *Anger*,  
 and *corrects* them in his hot *Displeasure*,  
 when they have sinned against him in a re-  
 markable

markable manner: but this is not always the Case.

The great God was not really angry with Job when he suffer'd him to fall into such complicated Distresses: for it is plain, that while he deliver'd him up into the Hands of Satan to be afflicted, he vindicates and honours him with a divine Testimony concerning his Piety. Job i. 8. *There is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright Man, one that feareth God and avoideth Evil.* Nor was he angry with his Son Jesus Christ, when it pleas'd the Father to bruise him and put him to grief, when he made his Soul an Offering for Sin, and he was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. Ezech. lili. To these we may add Paul the best of the Apostles, and the greatest of Christians, who was abundant in Labours and Sufferings beyond all the rest. See a dismal Catalogue of his Calamities, 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c. What Variety of Wretchedness, what terrible Persecutions from Men, what repeated Strokes of Distress came upon him by the Providence of God, which appear'd like the Effects of divine Wrath or Anger? But they were plainly design'd for more divine and blessed Purposes, both with regard to God, with regard to himself, and to all the succeeding Ages of the Christian Church.

DISC.



God does not always smite his own People to *punish Sin* and shew his Anger: but these Sufferings are often appointed for the *Trial of their Christian Virtues and Graces*, for the Exercise of their Humility and their Patience, for the Proof of their Steadfastness in Religion, for the Honour of the Grace of God in them, and for the Increase of their own future Weight of Glory. *Blessed is the Man that endures Temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, Jam. i. 12. The Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that you may be tried, and ye shall have Tribulation ten Days: be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life, Rev. ii. 10. Our light Afflictions which are but for a Moment, are working for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17.*

However, upon the whole, this World is a very troublesome and painful Place to the Children of God: They are subject here to many Weaknesses and Sins, Temptations and Follies; they are in danger of new Defilements; they go thro' many threatening Perils and many real Sorrows, which either are the Effects of the Displeasure of God, or, at least, carry an Appearance of divine Anger in them: But there is a time when these shall be finish'd, and Sorrow shall have its last Period: There is a time when these Calamities



Vol. II. and Joy at the Resurrection.

Calamities will be overpast, and shall return  
no more for ever.

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DISC.  


*Reflection.* Why then, O my Soul, why shouldst thou be so fond of dwelling in this present World? why shouldst thou be desirous of a long Continuance in it? Hast thou never found Sorrows and Afflictions enough among the Scenes of Life, to make thee weary of them? and when Sorrow and Sin have join'd together, have they not grievously imbitter'd this Life unto thee? Wilt thou never be weaned from these sensible Scenes of Flesh and Blood? Hast thou such a love to the Darkneses, the Defilements, and the Uneasinesses which are found in such a Prison as this is, as to make thee unwilling to depart when God shall call? Hast thou dwelt so long in this Tabernacle of Clay, and doest thou not groan, being burden'd? Hast thou no desire to a Release into that upper and better World, where Sorrows, Sins and Temptations have no Place, and where there shall never be the least Appearance or Suspicion of the Displeasure of thy God towards thee?

*Observ. II. The Grave is God's known  
Hiding-place for his People:* 'Tis his appointed Shelter and Retreat for his Favourites, when he finds them overpress'd either with present Dangers or Calamities, or when he foresees huge Calamities and Dangers,

DISC: like Storms and Billows, ready to overwhelm  
 XX them. Isa. lvii. *The Righteous is taken  
 away from the Evil to come.* God our hea-  
 venly Father beholds this Evil advancing  
 forward thro' all the present Smiles of Na-  
 ture, and all the peaceful Circumstances that  
 surround us. He hides his Children in the  
 Grave from a thousand Sins, and Sorrows,  
 and Distresses of this Life, which they fore-  
 saw not: And even when they are actually  
 beset behind and before, so that there seems  
 to be no natural way for their Escape, God  
 calls them aside into the Chambers of Death,  
 in the same sort of Language as he uses in  
 another Case, Isa. xxvi. 20. *Come my People,  
 enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy  
 Doors about thee, hide thyself as it were for  
 a little Moment till the Indignation be over-  
 pass'd.*

And yet perhaps it is possible that this  
 very Language of the Lord in *Isaiah* may  
 refer to the Grave, as God's Hiding-place,  
 for the Verse before promises a Resurrection:  
*Thy dead Men shall live; together with my  
 dead Body shall they arise: Awake and sing  
 ye that dwell in the Dust, for thy Dew is as  
 the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast  
 out the Dead.* And if we may suppose this  
 last Verse to have been transpos'd by any an-  
 cient Transcribers, so as to have follow'd  
 originally Verse 20, or 21, 'tis very natural  
 then to interpret the whole Paragraph con-  
 cerning

coming Death, as God's *Hiding-place* for his People, and their rising again thro' the Virtue of the Resurrection of Christ as their joyful Release. DESCI  
NK

Many a time God is pleas'd to shorten the Labours, and Travels, and Fatigues of good Men in this Wilderness, and he opens a Door of Rest to them where he pleases, and perhaps surprizes them into a State of Safety and Peace, where the *Weary* are at rest, and the *Wicked* cease from troubling; and holy Job seems to desire this Favour from his Maker here.

Sometimes indeed, in the History of this Book, he seems to break out into these Desires in too rude and angry a manner of Expression; and in a Fit of criminal Impatience he murmurs against God for upholding him in the Land of the Living: But at other times, as in this Text, he represents his Desires with more Decency and Submission. Every Desire to die is not to be construed sinful and criminal. Nature may ask of God a Relief from its Agonies and a Period to its Sorrows; nor does Grace utterly forbid it, if there be also an humble Submission and Resignation to the Will of God, such as we find exemplify'd by our blessed Saviour, *Father, if it be thy Will, let this Cup pass from me; yet not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

M 4                      On



**DISC.** On this second *Observation* I desire to make  
 XI these three *Reflections*.

*Reflect* 1. Tho' a good Man knows that Death was originally appointed as a Curse for Sin, yet his Faith can trust God to turn that Curse into a Blessing: He can humbly ask his Maker to release him from the painful Bonds of Life, to hasten the slow Approaches of Death, and to hide him in the Grave from some overwhelming Sorrows. This is the Glory of God in his Covenant of Grace with the Children of Men, that he turns *Curses into Blessings*, Deut. xxi. 1. And the Grave, which was design'd as a Prison for Sinners, is become a Place of Shelter to the Saints, where they are hidden and secured from rising Sorrows and Calamities. It is God's known Hiding-place for his own Children from the Envy and the Rage of Men, from all the known and unknown Agonies of Nature, the Diseases of the Flesh, and the Distresses of human Life, which perhaps might be overbearing and intolerable.

Why, O my fearful Soul, why shouldst thou be afraid of dying? Why shouldst thou be frighted at the dark Shadows of the Grave, when thou art weary with the Toils and Crosses of the Day? Hast thou not often desired the Shadow of the Evening, and longed for the Bed of natural Sleep, where thy Fatigues and thy Sorrows may be forgotten

gotten for a Season. And is not the Grave **DISCU**  
itself a sweet Sleeping-place for the Saints? **XIX**  
wherein they lie down and forget their Di-  
stresses, and feel none of the Miseries of  
human Life, and especially since it is softened  
and sanctify'd by the Son of God lying down  
there? Why shouldst thou be afraid to lay  
thy Head in the Dust? It is but entering  
into God's Hiding-place, into his Chambers  
of Rest and Repose: It is but committing  
thy Flesh, the meaner Part of thy Composi-  
tion, to his Care in the dark for a short  
Season: He will hide thee there, and keep  
thee in Safety from the dreadful Trials which  
perhaps would overwhelm thy Spirit. Some-  
times in the Course of his Providence he  
may find it necessary, that some spreading  
Calamity should overtake the Place where  
thou dwellest, or some distressing Stroke fall  
upon thy Family, or thy Friends, but he  
will hide thee under Ground before it comes,  
and thus disappoint all thy Fears, and lay  
every perplexing Thought into Rest and  
Silence.

*Reflect.* 2. Let it be ever remember'd,  
that the Grave is God's Hiding-place, and  
not our own: We are to venture into it  
without Terror when he calls us; but he  
does not suffer us to break into it our own  
way without his Call. Death and Life are  
in the Hands of God, and he never gave  
the Keys of them to mortal Men to let them-  
selves

**DISC** Iſſue out of this World when they pleaſe, **XX** nor to enter into his Hiding-place without his leave.

Bear up then, O my Soul, under all the Sorrows and Trials of this preſent State till God himſelf ſhall ſay, *It is ſufficient*, till our bleſſed Jeſus, who has the Keys put into his Hands, ſhall open the Door of Death, and give thee an Entrance into that dark and peaceful Retreat. 'Tis a ſafe and ſilent Refuge from the Buſtle and the Noiſe, the Labours and the Troubles of Life; but he that forces it open with his own Hands, how will he dare to appear before God in the World of Spirits? What will he answer, when with a dreadful Frown the great God ſhall demand of him, *Friend, how cameſt thou in hither?* Who ſent for thee, or gave thee leave to come? Such a Wretch muſt venture upon ſo raſh an Action at the Peril of the Wrath of God, and his own eternal Deſtruction.

Our bleſſed Jeſus, who has all the vaſt Scheme of divine Counſels before his Eyes, by having the Books of his Father's Decrees put into his Hands, he knows how long it is proper for thee, O Chriſtian, to fight and labour, to wreſtle and ſtrive with Sins, Temptations and Difficulties in the preſent Life. He knows beſt in what Moment to put a Period to them, and to pronounce thee Conqueror. Fly not from the Field of Battle



for want of holy Fortitude, tho' thy Enemies DISC  
mies and thy Dangers: He never so many XK  
nor dare to dismiss thyself from thy appointed  
Post, till the Lord of Life pronounce the  
Word of thy Dismission, *also I will be sworn*

Sometimes I have been ready to say within  
in myself, Why is my Life prolonged in  
Sorrow? Why are my Days lengthen'd out  
to see further Wretchedness? Methinks the  
Grave should be ready for me, and the House  
appointed for all the Living. What can I  
do further for God or for Man here on Earth,  
since my Nature pines away with painful  
Sickness, my Nerves are unstrung, my Spi-  
rits diffipated, and my best Powers of act-  
ing are infeebl'd and almost lost? Peace,  
peace, O thou complaining Spirit; Dost  
thou know the Counsels of the Almighty,  
and the secret Designs of thy God and thy  
Saviour? He has many deep and unknown  
Purposes in continuing his Children amidst  
heavy Sorrows, which they can never pene-  
trate or learn in this World. Silence and  
Submission becomes thee at all times. *Fa-  
ther, not my Will but thy Will be done.*

And let it be hinted to thee, O my Soul,  
that 'tis much more honourable to be weary  
of this Life, because of the Sins and Temp-  
tations of it, than because of the Toils and  
Sorrows that attend it. If we must groan  
in this Tabernacle being burden'd, let the  
Snarcs, and the Dangers, and the Defile-  
ments

Discernments of it be the chief Springs of thy  
 XI. Groaning and the warmest Motives to request  
 a Release. God loves to see his People more  
 afraid of Sin than of Sorrow. If thy Cor-  
 ruptions are so strong, and the Temptations  
 of Life so unhappily surround thee, that thou  
 art daily crying out, *Who shall deliver thee  
 from the Body of Sin and Death*, then thou  
 mayst more honourably send up a Wish to  
 Heaven, *O that I had the Wings of a Dove,*  
*that I might fly away and be at rest!* *O that*  
*God would hide me in the Grave* from my  
 prevailing Iniquities, and from the ruffling  
 and disquieting Influence of my own Fol-  
 lies and my daily Temptations! But never  
 be thou quite weary of doing or suffering  
 the Will of thy heavenly Father, tho' he  
 should continue thee in this mortal Life a  
 Length of Years beyond thy Desires, and  
 should withhold thee from his secret Place  
 of Retreat and Rest.

A constant and joyful Readiness at the  
 Call of God to depart hence, with a cheer-  
 ful Patience to continue here during his Plea-  
 sure, is the most perfect and blessed Temper  
 that a Christian can arrive at: It gives God  
 the highest Glory, and keeps the Soul in the  
 sweetest Peace.

Reflect. 3. This one Thought, that the  
*Grave is God's Hiding-place*, should compose  
 our Spirits to Silence, and abate our Mourning  
 for the loss of Friends, who have given suf-  
 ficient

ficient Evidence that they are the Children of God. Their heavenly Father has seized them from the midst of their Trials, Dangers and Difficulties, and given them a secure Refuge in his own appointed Place of Rest and Safety. *Jesus* has open'd the Door of the Grave with his golden Key, and hath let them into a Chamber of Repose: He has concealed them in a silent Retreat, where Temptation and Sin cannot reach them, and where Anguish and Misery can never come.

When I have lost therefore a dear and delightful Relative or Friend, or perhaps many of them in a short Season are called successively down to the Dust, let me say thus within myself, " It is their God and my God has done it: He saw what new Temptations were ready to surround them in the Circumstances of Life wherein they stood: He beheld the Trials and Difficulties that were ready to encompass them on all sides, and his Love made a way for their Escape: He open'd the dark Retreat of Death, and hid them there from a thousand Perils which might have plunged them into Guilt and Defilement: He beheld this as the proper Season to give them a Release from a World of Labour and Toil, Vanity and Vexation, Sin and Sorrow: They are taken away from the Evil to come, and I will learn to complain no more. The blessed *Jesus*, to whom they had devoted them-

selves,



Disc. selves, well knew what Allurements of  
 II. Safety and Joy might have been too pre-  
 valent over them, and he gave them a  
 kind Escape lest their Souls should suffer  
 any real Detriment, lest their strict Pro-  
 fession of Piety should be lost, or dis-  
 honoured: He knew how much they were  
 able to bear, and he would lay upon them  
 no further Burden: He saw rising Diffi-  
 culties approaching, and new Perils com-  
 ing upon them beyond their strength,  
 and he fulfills his own Promises, and glo-  
 rifies his own Faithfulness, by opening the  
 Door of his well-known Hiding-place,  
 and giving them a safe Refuge there. He  
 keeps them there in secret from the Cor-  
 ruptions of a publick Life, and the mul-  
 tiply'd Dangers of a degenerate Age, which  
 might have divided their Hearts from  
 God and Things heavenly: And perhaps  
 he guards them also in that dark Retreat  
 from some long and languishing Sicknes,  
 some unknown Distress, some overbear-  
 ing Flood of Misery, which was like to  
 come upon them had they continued  
 longer on the Stage of Life.  
 "Let this silence thy murmuring Thoughts,  
 "O my Soul; let this dry up thy Tears  
 "which are ready to overflow on such an  
 "Occasion. Dare not pronounce it a Stroke  
 "of Anger from the Hand of God, who  
 "divided them from the tempting or the  
 "distressing

"distressing Scenes of this World, and  
"kindly removed them out of the way of  
"Danger. This was the wisest Method of  
"his Love, to guard them from many a  
"Folly and many a Sorrow, which he fore-  
"saw just at the Door."

Will the wounded and complaining Heart  
go on to groan and murmur still. "But my  
"Son was carried off in the Prime of Life;  
"or my Daughter in her blooming Years;  
"they stood flourishing in the Vigour of  
"their Nature, and 'twas my Delight to  
"behold their growing Appearances of Vir-  
"tue and Goodness, and that in the midst  
"of Ease, and Plenty, and Prospects of  
"Happiness, so far as this World can af-  
"ford it?"

But could you look through the next  
Year to the End of it? Could you penetrate  
into future Events, and survey the Scenes of  
seven Years to come? Could your Heart  
assure itself of the real Possession of this ima-  
ginary View of Happiness and Peace? Per-  
haps the blessed God saw the Clouds ga-  
thering afar off, and at a great Distance of  
Time, and in much Kindness he housed  
your Favourite from unknown Trials, Dan-  
gers and Sorrows. So a prudent Gardener,  
who is acquainted with the Sky, and skil-  
ful in the Signs of the Seasons, even in  
the Month of May, foresees a heavy Tem-  
pest rising in the Edge of the Horizon,  
while

DISC while a vulgar Eye observes nothing but Sunshine, and he who knows the Worth and the Tenderness of some special Plants in his Garden, houses them in haste, lest they be exposed and demolished by the sweeping Rain or Hail.

You say, *These Children were in the Bloom of Life, and in the most desirable Appearance of Joy and Satisfaction*: but is not that also usually the most dangerous Season of Life, and the Hour of most powerful Temptation? Was not that the time when their Passions might have been too hard for them, and the deluding Pleasures of Life stood round them with a most perilous Assault? And what if God, out of pure Compassion, saw it necessary to hide them from an Army of Perils at once, and to carry them off the Stage of Life with more Purity and Honour? Surely when the great God has appointed it, when the blessed *Jesus* has done it, we would not rise up in Opposition and say, "But I would have had them live longer here at all Adventures: I wish they were alive again, let the Consequence be what it will." This is not the Voice of Faith or Patience; this is not the Language of holy Submission and Love to God, nor can our Souls approve of such irregular Storms of ungoverned Affection, which oppose themselves to the divine Will, and ruffle the Soul with criminal Disquietude.

There



There are many, even of the Children of God, who had left a more unblemished and a more honourable Character behind them, if they had died much sooner. The latter End of Life hath sometimes sullied their Brightness, and tarnished the Glory they had acquired in a hopeful Youth. Their growing Years have fallen under such Temptations, and been defiled and disgraced by such Failings, as would have been entirely prevented had they been summon'd away into God's Hiding-place some Years before. Our blessed Jesus walks among the Roses and Lilies in the Garden of his Church, and when he sees a wintry Storm coming upon some tender Plants of Righteousness, he hides them in the Earth to preserve Life in them, that they may bloom with new Glories when they shall be raised from that Bed. The blessed God acts like a tender Father, and consults the Safety and the Honour of his Children, when the Hand of his Mercy snatches them away before that powerful Temptation comes, which he foresees would have defiled and distress'd, and almost destroy'd them. They are not lost, but they are gone to Rest a little sooner than we are. Peace be to that Bed of Dust where they are hidden, by the Hand of their God, from unknown Dangers! Blessed be our Lord Jesus, who has the Keys of the Grave,

DISC. and never opens it for his Favourite, but in  
XI. the wisest Season!

Observ. III. God has appointed a set Time in his own Counsels for all his Children to continue in Death: Those whom he has hidden in the Grave he remembers they lie there, and he will not suffer them to abide in the Dust for ever. When Job intreats of God that he may be hidden from his Sorrows in the Dust of Death, he requests also that God would appoint a set Time for his Release, and remember him. His Faith seems to have had a Glimpse of the blessed Resurrection. Our Senses and our carnal Passions would cry out, where is *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and the rest of the ancient Worthies, who have been long Sleepers in their Beds of Repose for many thousand Years? But Faith assures us, that God numbers the Days and the Months of their Concealment under Ground, he knows where their Dust lies, and where to find every scatter'd Atom against the great restoring Day. They are unseen indeed and forgotten of Men, but they are under the Eye and the Keeping of the blessed God: He watches over their sleeping Dust, and while the World has forgotten and lost even their Names, they are every Moment under the Eye of God, for they stand written in his Book of Life,

Life, with the Name of the Lamb at the DISC. Head of them.

Jesus, his Son, had but three Days appointed him to dwell in this Hiding-place, and he rose again at the appointed Hour. Other good Men, who were gone to their Grave not long before him, arose again at the Resurrection of Christ, and made a Visit to many in Jerusalem: Their appointed Hiding-place was but for a short Season; and all the Children of God shall be remember'd in their proper Seasons in Faithfulness to his Son to whom he has given them: The Head is raised to the Mansions of Glory, and the Members must not for ever lie in Dust.

*Reflection.* Then let all the Saints of God wait with Patience for the appointed Time when he will call them down to Death, and let them lie down in their secret Beds of Repose, and in a waiting Frame commit their Dust to his Care till the Resurrection.

*All the Days of my appointed Time (says Job)*

*I will wait till my Change come.* The Word

*Appointed Time* is supposed to signify *Warfare* in the Hebrew: As a Centinel, when

he is fixed to his Post by his General, he

waits there till he has Orders for a Release.

And this Clause of the Verse may refer ei-

ther to *dying* or *rising again*, for either of

them is a very great and important *Change*,

passing



DISC. passing upon human Nature, whether from  
 XI. Life to Death, or from Death to Life.

It is said by the Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. xxviii.  
 16. *He that believeth shall not make haste*,  
 i. e. he that trusts in the Wisdom and the  
 promised Mercy of God will not be too im-  
 gent or importunate in any of his Desires?  
 'Tis for want of Faith that Nature some-  
 times is in too much haste to die, as *Job* in  
 some of his Expressions appears to have been,  
 or as *Elijah* perhaps discover'd himself when  
 he was wandering in the Wilderness discon-  
 solate and almost despairing, or as the Pro-  
 phet *Jeremiah* sufficiently manifested, when  
 he cursed the Day of his Birth, or as *Jonah*  
 was, that peevish Prophet, when he was  
 angry with God for not taking away his  
 Life; but the ground of it was, he was  
 vexed because God did not destroy *Nineveh*  
 according to his Prophecy: These are cer-  
 tain Blemishes of the Children of God left  
 upon Record in his Word, to give us Warn-  
 ing of our Danger of Impatience, and to  
 guard us against their Sins and Follies. And  
 since we know that God has appointed the  
 Seasons of our Entrance into Death, and  
 into the State of the Resurrection; we should  
 humbly commit the Disposal of ourselves to  
 the Hand of our God, who will bestow  
 upon us the most needful Blessings in the  
 most proper Season.

Do

Do not the *Spirits of the Just* made per-  
fect wait in Patience for the great and blef-  
sed rising Day which God has appointed,  
and for the illustrious Change of their Bo-  
dies from Corruption and Darkneſs to Light,  
and Life, and Glory? God has promiſed it,  
and that ſuffices, and ſupports their waiting  
Spirits, tho' they know not the Hour. The  
*Father keeps that in his own Hand*, and per-  
haps reveals it to none but his Son *Jeſus*,  
who is exalted to be the Governor and Judge  
of the World. There are Millions of Souls  
waiting in that ſeparate State for the Ac-  
complishment of theſe laſt and beſt Pro-  
miſes, ready to ſhout and rejoice when they  
ſhall ſee and feel that bright Morning dawning  
upon them.

Wait therefore, O my Soul, as becomes  
a Child of God in the Wilderneſs among  
many Trials, Darkneſſes and Diſtreſſes. He  
has ſtripped thee perhaps of one Comfort  
after another, and thy Friends and dear Re-  
latives in Succeſſion are called down to the  
Duſt; they are releaſed from their Conflicts,  
and are placed far out of the reach of every  
Temptation; and it is not thy Buſineſs to  
preſcribe to God at what Hour he ſhall re-  
leaſe thee alſo. Whenſoever he is pleaſed  
to call thee to lay down thy Fleſh in the  
Duſt, and to enter into God's Hiding-place,  
meet thou the Summons with holy Courage,  
Satisfaction and Joy, enter into the Cham-

DISC. ber of Rest till all the Days of Sin, Sorrow  
 XI. and Wretchedness are overpast: Lie down  
 there in a waiting Frame, and commit thy  
 Flesh to his Care and Keeping till the Hour  
 in which he has appointed thy glorious  
 Change.

Observ. IV. *The lively View of a happy Resurrection, and a well-grounded Hope of this blessed Change, is a solid and divine Comfort to the Saints of God, under all Trials of every kind both in Life and Death.* The Faith and Hope of a joyful Rising-day has supported the Children of God under long Distresses and huge Agonies of Sorrow which they sustain here. It is the Expectation of this desirable Day that animates the Soul with Vigour and Life to fulfil every painful and dangerous Duty. 'Tis for this we expose ourselves to the bitter Reproaches and Persecutions of the wicked World; 'tis for this that we conflict with all our Adversaries on Earth, and all the Powers of Darkness that are sent from Hell to annoy us; 'tis this joyful Expectation that bears up our Spirits under every present Burden and Calamity of Life.

What could we do in such a painful and dying World, or how could we bear with Patience the long Fatigues of such a wretched Life, if we had no hope of rising again from the Dead? Surely we are the most  
 miserable



*miserable of all Men in Days of publick Per-* DISC.  
*secution, if we had hope only in this Life,* XI.

1 Cor. xv. 19. 'Tis for this that we labour, and suffer, and endure whatsoever our heavenly Father is pleased to lay upon us. 'Tis this confirms our Fortitude, and makes us *steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, for as much as we know that our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,* 1 Cor. xv. 58. 'Tis this that enables us to bear the Loss of our dearest Friends with Patience and Hope, and assuages the Smart of our sharpest Sorrows: For since we believe that *Jesus died and rose again,* so we rejoice in hope that *they which sleep in Jesus shall be brought with him at his Return,* and shall appear in brighter and more glorious Circumstances than ever our Eyes were blessed with here on Earth, 1 Thes. iv. 13. This teaches us to triumph over Death and the Grave in divine Language, *O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?*

*Reflection.* What are thy chief Burdens, O my Soul? Whence are all thy Sighs and thy daily Groanings? What are thy Distresses of Flesh or Spirit? Summon them all in one View, and see whether there be not Power and Glory enough in a Resurrection to conquer and silence them all, and to put thy present Sorrows to flight?

**DISC.** Dost thou dwell in a weary and suffering World, amongst Oppressions and Reproaches?

**XI.**

But those who reproach and oppress are but mortal Creatures, who shall shortly go down to the Dust, and then they shall tyrannize and afflict thee no more: The great Rising-day shall change the Scene from Oppression and Reproach to Dominion and Glory. When they lie down in the Grave like Beasts of Slaughter, Death shall feed on them, and the Upright shall have Dominion over them in the Morning, when God shall redeem thy Soul from the Power of the Grave. Thy God shall hide thy Body from their Rage in his own appointed Resting-place, and he shall receive thy Soul, and keep it secure in his own Presence, till that blessed Morning break upon this lower Creation; then shalt thou arise and shine, for the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Do the Calamities which thou sufferest proceed from the Hand of God? Art thou disquieted with daily Pain, with Sickneses and Anguish in thy Flesh? Or art thou surrounded with Crosses and Disappointments in thy outward Circumstances? Are thy Spirits sunk with many Loads of Care and pressing Perplexities? Canst thou not forget them all in the Vision that Faith can give thee of the great Rising-day? Canst thou not say in the Language of Faith, The Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy

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to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed up in us. Then the Head and the Heart shall take no more, and every Circumstance around thee shall be pleasing and joyful for ever.

DISC.  
XI.

Or art thou tenderly affected with the Loss of pious Friends, who have been very dear and desirable? Perhaps thy Sensibilities here are too great and painful: They are such indeed as Nature is ready to indulge, but are they not more than God requires, or the Gospel allows? Do not thy Thoughts dwell too much on the Gloom and Darkness of the Grave? O think of that bright Hour when every Saint shall rise from the dark Retreats of Death with more complete Characters of Beauty, Holiness and Pleasure than ever this World could shew them in! They are not perish'd, but sent a little before us into God's *Hiding-place*, where tho' they lie in Dust and Darkness, yet they are safe from the Dangers and Vexations of Life; but they shall spring up in the happy Moment into Immortality, and shall join with thee in a mutual Surprise at each other's divine Change.

Or dost thou feel the *Corruptions* of thy Heart working within thee, and the Sins of thy Nature restless in their Endeavours to bring Defilement upon thy Soul, and Guilt upon thy Conscience: Go on and maintain the holy Warfare against all these rising Iniquities?



**DISC**quities? This thy Warfare shall not continue long: Thou shalt find every one of these Sins buried with thee in the Grave, but they shall arise to assault thee no more. The Saint shall leave every Sin behind him when he breaks out of the Dust at the Summons of *Christ*, and thou shalt find no Seeds of Iniquity in thy Body when it is raised from the Grave. *Holiness to the Lord* shall be inscribed upon all thy Powers for ever.

Or art thou perplex'd, O my Soul, at the near Prospect of Death and all the Terrors and dismal Appearances that surround it? Art thou afraid to lie down in the cold and noisome Grave? Does thy Nature shudder at it as a gloomy Place of Horror? These indeed are the Prejudices of Sense; but the Language of Faith will tell thee, 'tis only *God's Hiding-place* where he secures his Saints till all the Ages of Sin and Sorrow are overpast. Look forward to the glorious Morning when thou shalt rise from the Dust among ten thousand of thy Fellows, every one in the Image of the Son of God, with their *Bodies formed after the Likeness of his glorious Body*, and rejoicing together with divine Satisfaction in the Pleasure of this heavenly Change. Try whether the Meditation of these Glories, and the distant Prospect of this illustrious Day, will not scatter all the Gloom that hovers round the Grave,

Grave, and vanquish the fiercest Apparitions of the King of Terrors. DISC.

What is there, O my Soul, among all the Miseries thou hast felt, or all that thou fearest, that can sink thy Courage, if the Faith of a Resurrection be but alive and wakeful? But this leads me to the

Observ. V. *The Saints of God, who are resting in their Beds of Dust, will arise joyfully at the Call of their heavenly Father. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee, said holy Job. The Command of God creates Life, and gives Power to the Dead to arise and speak. I come, O Lord, I come. When Jesus, the Son of God, as with the Trumpet of an Archangel, shall pronounce the Word which he spake to Lazarus, Arise and come forth, Dust and Rottenness shall hear the Call from Heaven, and the Clods of Corruption all round the Earth shall arise into the Form of Man: The Saints shall appear at once and answer to that divine Call, array'd in a Glory like that of Angels; an illustrious Host of Martyrs and Confessors for the Truth; an Army of Heroes and valiant Sufferers for the Name and Cause of God and his Son; an innumerable Multitude of faithful Servants who have finish'd their Work, and lay down at Rest.*

How shall *Adam*, the Father of our Race, together with the holy Men of his Day, be  
fur-

**DISC.** surprised, when they shall awake out of their long Sleep of five thousand Years? **II.** How shall all the Saints of the intermediate Ages break from their Beds of Darknels with intense Delight? And those who lay down but yesterday in the Dust shall start up at once with their early Ancestors, and answer to the Call of *Jesus* from one End of Time to the other, and from all the Ends of the Earth. They shall arise together to meet the Lord in the Air, that they may be for ever with the Lord.

Never was any Voice obey'd with more Readiness and Joy than the Voice or Trumpet of the great Archangel, summoning all the Children of God to awake from their long Slumbers, and to leave their dusty Beds behind them, with all the Seeds of Sin and Sorrow, which are buried and lost there for ever. Never did any Army on Earth march with more Speed and Pleasure, at the Sound of the Trumpet, to attend their General to a new Triumph, than this glorious Assembly shall arise to meet their returning Lord, when this last Trumpet sounds, and when he shall come the second Time in the full Glories of his Person and his Offices, as Lord and Judge of the World, to bring his faithful Followers into complete Salvation.

*Reflection.* Whensoever, O my Soul, thou feelest any Reluctance to obey the Summons of Death, encourage thy Faith, and scatter thy



thy Fears, by waiting for the Call of God **DISC**  
to a blessed Resurrection. *Jesus himself lay* **II**  
down in the Grave at his Father's Com-  
mand, and he arose with Joy at the appoint-  
ed Hour as the Head of the new Creation;  
as the First-born from the Dead; and he  
has Orders given him by the Father to sum-  
mon every Saint from their Graves at the  
long appointed Hour. Because *Jesus* arose  
and lives, they shall arise and live also. O  
may my Flesh lie down in the Dust with all  
Courage and Composure, and rejoice to  
escape into a Place of Rest and Silence, far  
away from the Noise and Tumult, the  
Hurry and Bustle of this present Life; be-  
ing well assured that the next Sound which  
shall be heard is the Voice of the Son of  
God, *Arise ye Dead!* Make haste then, O  
blessed *Jesus*, and finish thy divine Work  
here on Earth: I lay down my Head to  
sleep in the Dust, waiting for thy Call to  
awake in the Morning.

Observ. VI. *God takes delight in his Works*  
*of Nature, but much more when they are*  
*dignify'd and adorned by the Operations of*  
*divine Grace.* Thou wilt have a desire, saith  
the good Man in my Text, *to the Work of*  
*thy own Hands.* Thou hast moulded me  
and fashion'd me at first by thy Power, thou  
hast new created me by thy Spirit, and thou  
hast hidest me for a Season in one of thy  
secret

DISC. secret Chambers of Death, thou wilt raise  
 XI. me again to Light and Life, and in my Flesh  
 shall I see God.

When the Almighty had created this visible World, he survey'd his Works on the seventh Day, and pronounced them all Good, and he took delight in them all before Sin enter'd and defiled them: And when he has deliver'd the Creatures of his Power from the Bondage of Corruption, and has purged our Souls and our Bodies from Sin and from every evil Principle, he will again delight in the Sons and Daughters of Adam whom he has thus cleansed and refined by his sovereign Grace, and has qualify'd and adorned them for his own Presence: *He will sing and rejoice over them, and rest in his Love, Zephan. iii. 17.*

He will love to see them with his Son Jesus at their Head, diffusing Holiness and Glory through all his Members. Jesus the Redeemer will love to see them round him, for he has bought them with his Blood, and they are a Treasure too precious to be for ever lost. He will rejoice to behold them rising at his Call into a Splendor like his own, and they shall be satisfy'd when they awake from Death into his Likeness, and appear in the Image of his own glorious Body, fit Heirs for the Inheritance of Heaven, fit Companions for the blessed Angels of Light, and prepar'd to dwell for ever with himself.

*Reflection.*

*Reflection.* And shall not we who are the **DISC.**  
 Work of his Hands have a Desire to him **XI.**  
 that made us? to him that redeemed us?  
 to him that has new created and moulded  
 us into his own Likeness? Do we not long  
 to see him? Have we no Desire to be with  
 him, even tho' we should be *absent from*  
*the Body* for a Season? But much more  
 should we delight to think of being *present*  
*with the Lord*, when our whole Natures,  
 Body and Soul, shall appear as the new  
 Workmanship of Almighty Power; our Souls  
 new created in the Image of God, and our  
 Bodies new born from the Dead, into a Life  
 of Immortality.

VII. The last *Observation* is of a very  
 general Nature, and spreads itself thro' all  
 my Text, and that is, *How much are we*  
*indebted to God for the Revelation of the New*  
*Testament, which teaches us to find out the*  
*Blessings which are contain'd in the Old, and*  
*to fetch out the Glories and Treasures which*  
*are concealed there?* The Writers of the  
 Gospel have not only pointed us to the rich  
 Mines where these Treasures lie, but have  
 brought forth many of the Jewels and set  
 them before us. 'Tis this Gospel that *brings*  
*Life and Immortality to Light by Jesus Christ,*  
 2 Tim. i. 10. 'Tis this Gospel that scat-  
 ters the Gloom and Darkness which was  
 spread over the Face of the Grave, and il-  
 lumines



DISC. illuminates all the Chambers of Death. Who  
 XI could have found out the Doctrine of the  
 Resurrection contain'd in that Word of  
 Grace given to *Abraham*, *I am thy God*, &  
*Jesus*, the great Prophet, had not taught us  
 to explain it thus, *Matth. xxii. 31*. *God is*  
*not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.*

We who have the Happiness to live in  
 the Days of the *Messiah*, know more than  
 all the ancient Prophets were acquainted  
 with, and understand the Word of their  
 Prophecies better than they themselves; for  
 they searched what or what manner of time  
 the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did  
 signify, when it testify'd before hand the Suf-  
 ferings of Christ, and the Glory which should  
 follow, *1 Pet. i. 11*. But we read all this  
 fairly written in the Gospel. Do you think  
 that good *David* could have explain'd some  
 of his own *Psalms* into so divine a Sense,  
 or *Isaiah* given such a bright Account of  
 his own Words of Prophecy, as *St. Paul* has  
 done in several Places of the New Testa-  
 ment, where he cites and unfolds them? Could  
 those illustrious Ancients have given  
 us such abundant Consolation and Hope thro'  
 the Scriptures, which they themselves wrote  
 aforetime, as this Apostle has done? *Rom.*  
*xv. 4*. Do you think *Job* could have read  
 us such a Lecture on his own Expressions in  
 this Text, or in that bright Prophecy in  
 the sixth Chapter, as the very meanest  
 among

among the Ministers of the Gospel can do **DISC.**  
 by the Help of the New Testament? For **XI.**  
 in Point of clear Discoveries of divine Truths  
 and Graces, the least in the Kingdom of the  
 Messiah is greater than John the Baptist and  
 all the Prophets, and our blessed Jesus has  
 told us so, Matth. xi. 11, 13. And by the  
 Aid and Influences of his Spirit we may be  
 taught yet further to search into these hid-  
 den Mines of Grace, and bring forth new  
 Treasures of Glory.

*Reflection.* Awake, O my Soul, and bless  
 the Lord with all thy Powers, and give  
 thanks with holy Joy for the Gospel of his  
 Son Jesus. 'Tis Jesus by his rising from  
 the Dead has left a divine Light upon the  
 Gates of the Grave, and scatter'd much of  
 the Darkness that surrounded it. 'Tis the  
 Gospel of Christ which casts a Glory even  
 upon the Bed of Death, and spreads a Brite-  
 ness upon the Graves of the Saints in the lively  
 Views of a great Rising-day. O blessed and  
 surprizing Prospect of Faith! O illustrious  
 Scenes of future Vision and Transport! when  
 the Son of God shall bring forth to publick  
 View all his redeemed ones, who had been  
 long hidden in Night and Dust, and shall  
 present them all to God the Father in his  
 own Image, bright, and holy, and unblemish-  
 ed, in the midst of all the Splendors of the  
 Resurrection! O blessed and joyful Voice,  
 when he shall say with divine Pleasure,  
 "Here am I, and the Children which thou  
 VOL. II. O " hast

DABE. *Thou hast given me* We have both passed thro'  
 XI. *the Grave,* and I have made them all  
 Conquerors of Death, and vested them  
 with Immortality according to thy divine  
 Commission! *Thine they were,* O Father,  
 and thou hast given them into my Hands,  
 and behold I have brought them all safe  
 to thy appointed Mansions, and I present  
 them before thee without Spot or Blemish.  
 And many a Parent of a pious Household  
 in that Day, when they shall see their Sons  
 and their Daughters around them, all array'd  
 with the Beams of the Son of Righteous-  
 ness, shall eccho with holy Joy to the Voice  
 of the blessed Jesus, "Lord, here am I and  
 the Children which thou hast given me." I  
 was afraid, as Job once might be when  
 his Friends suggested this Fear; I was  
 afraid that my Children had sinned against  
 God, and he had cast them away for their  
 Transgression: But I am now convinced,  
 when he seized them from my Sight he  
 only took them out of the way of Temp-  
 tation and Danger, and concealed them  
 for a Season in his safe Hiding-place: I  
 mourned in the Day-time for a lost Son  
 or a lost Daughter, and in the Night my  
 Couch was bedew'd with my Tears: I  
 was scared with midnight Dreams on their  
 account, and the Visions of the Grave ter-  
 rify'd me because my Children were there:  
 I gave up myself to Sorrow for fear of  
 the



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**DISC. XI.**

"the Displeasure of my God both against  
"them and against me: But how unreason-  
"able were these Sorrows? How ground-  
"less were my Fears? How gloriously am  
"I disappointed this blessed Morning? I  
"beset my dear Offspring called out of that  
"long Retreat where God had concealed  
"them, and they arise to meet the divine  
"Call. I hear them answering with Joy to  
"the happy Summons. My Eyes behold  
"them risen in the Image of my God and  
"their God; they are near me; they stand  
"with me at the right Hand of the Judge;  
"now shall we rejoice together in the Sen-  
"tence of eternal Blessedness from the Lips  
"of my Lord and their Lord, my Redeemer  
"and their Redeemer." Amen.

**O 2**

**Among**

IX

Among my Papers I have found a Speech  
spoken at a Grave, which I transcribed  
almost fifty Years ago; and which deserves  
to be saved from perishing. It was pro-  
nounced many Years before at the Burial  
of a pious Person, by a Minister there  
present, supposed to be the Rev. Mr. Pe-  
ter Sterry; and the Subject of it being  
suited to this Discourse, I thought it not  
improper to preserve it here.

**C**hristian Friends, tho' Sin be entered into  
the World, and by Sin Death, and so  
Death passed upon all Men, for that all have  
sinned; yet it seems not wholly suitable to our  
Christian Hope, to stand by and see the Grave  
with open Mouth take in, and swallow down  
any Part of a precious Saint, and not bring  
some Testimony against the Devourer. And  
yet that our Witness may be in Righteousness,  
we must first own, acknowledge, and accept  
of that Good and Serviceableness that is in it.

For thro' the Death and Resurrection of our  
dear Redeemer, Death and the Grave are be-  
come sweeten'd to us, and sanctify'd for us:  
So that as Death is but a Sleep, the Grave  
thro' his lying down in it and rising again,  
is become as a Bed of Repose to them that are  
in him, and a safe and quiet Hiding-place  
for his Saints till the Resurrection.

And

And in this respect we do for ourselves, and for this our dearly Beloved in the Lord, we rest of thee, O Grave, and readily deliver up her Body to thee: it is a Body that hath been weaken'd and weary'd with long Affliction and Anguish: we freely give it into thee, receive it, and let it have in thee a quiet Rest from all its Labours; for thus we read it written of thee. There the Wicked cease from troubling, and there the Weary be at Rest.

Besides, it is, O Grave, a Body that hath been sweetly embalm'd by a virtuous, pious, peaceable Conversation, by several inward Openings and Out-pourings of the Spirit of Life, by much Patience and Meekness in strong Trials and Afflictions: Receive it, and let it enjoy in thee, what was once deeply impress'd on her own Heart, and in a due Season written out with her own Hand, a Sabbath in the Grave: For thus also we find it recorded of our Lord and her Lord, that he enjoy'd the Rest of his last Sabbath in the Grave.

But we know thee, O Grave, to be also a Devourer, and yet we can freely deliver up the Body into thee: There was in it a contracted Corruptibility, Dishonour and Weakness; take them as thy proper Prey, they belong to thee, and we would not withhold them from thee: Freely swallow them up for ever, that they may appear no more.

Yet know, O Grave, there is in the Body, consider'd as once united to such a Soul, a di-



vine Relation to the Lord of Life; and this thou must not, thou canst not dissolve or destroy. But know, and even before thee, and over thee be it spoken, that there is a Season hastening wherein we shall expect it again from thee in Incorruption, Honour, and Power.

We now sow it into thee in Dishonour, but expect it again returned from thee in Glory; we now sow it into thee, in Weakness, we expect it again in Power; we now sow it into thee a natural Body, we look for it again from thee a spiritual Body.

And when thou hast fulfilled that End for which the Prince of Life, who took thee Captive, made thee to serve, then shalt thou who hast devour'd, be thyself also swallow'd up; for thus it is written of thee, O Death, I will be thy Plague, O Grave, I will be thy Destruction. And then shall we sing over thee what also is written of thee, O Death, where is now thy Sting? O Grave, where is now thy Victory? Amen.

Note, A Line or two is alter'd in this Speech, to suit it more to the Understanding and the Sense of the present Age.

# DISCOURSE XII.

## The Nature of the Punishments in Hell.

MARK IX. 46.

*Where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire  
is not quenched.*

### INTRODUCTION.

**T**HESE Words are a short Description of Hell, by the Lips of the Son of God, who came down from Heaven, And he who lay in the Bosom of his Father, and was intimate in all the Counsels of his Mercy and Justice; must be supposed to know what the Terrors and the Wrath of God are, as well as his Compassion and his Goodness.

DISC.  
XII.

'Tis confess'd, that a Discourse on this dreadful Subject is not a direct Ministration of Grace and the glad Tidings of Salvation, yet it has a great and happy Tendency to the same End, even the Salvation of sinful Men; for it awakens them to a more pierce-

**DISC.** ing Sight, and to a more keen Sensation of  
**XII.** their own Guilt and Danger; it possesses them  
 with a more lively Sense of their  
 Misery, it fills them with a holy Dread of  
 divine Punishment, and excites the power-  
 ful Passion of Fear to make them fly from  
 the Wrath to come, and betake themselves  
 to the Grace of God revealed in the Go-  
 spel.

The blessed Saviour himself, who was the  
 most perfect Image of his Father's Love,  
 and the prime Minister of his Grace, pub-  
 lishes more of these Terrors to the World,  
 and preaches Hell and Damnation to Sin-  
 ners more than all the Prophets or Teachers  
 that ever went before him; and several of  
 the Apostles imitate their Lord in this prac-  
 tice: They kindle the Flames of Hell in  
 their Epistles, they thunder thro' the very  
 Hearts and Consciences of Men with the  
 Voice of Damnation and eternal Misery, to  
 make stupid Sinners feel as much of these  
 Terrors in the present Prospect as is possible,  
 in order to escape the actual Sensation of  
 them in time to come.

Such awful Discourses are many times  
 also of excellent use to keep the Children of  
 God, and the Disciples of Jesus, in a holy  
 and watchful Frame, and to affright them  
 from returning to Sin and Folly, and from  
 the Indulgence of any Temptation, by set-  
 ting these Terrors of the Lord before their  
 Eyes.



Eyes. O may these Words of his Terror, DISC  
 from the Lips of one of the meepest of his XIII  
 Ministers, be attended with divine Power  
 from the convincing and sanctifying Spirit,  
 that they may answer these happy Ends and  
 Purposes, that they may excite a solemn  
 Reverence of the dreadful Majesty of God  
 in all our Souls, and awaken us to Repent-  
 ance for every Sin, and a more watchful  
 Course of Holiness!

Let us then consider the Expression in my  
 Text: When our Saviour mentions the  
 Word *Hell*, he adds, *where their Worms*  
*die not, and the Fire is not quenched*; in  
 which Description we may read the Nature  
 of this Punishment, and the Perpetuity of it.

First, We shall consider the Nature of  
 this Punishment, as it is represented by the  
 Metaphors which our Saviour uses; and if  
 I were to give the most natural and proper  
 Sense of this Representation, I would say  
 that our Saviour might borrow this Figure  
 of Speech from these three Considerations.

1. *Worms and Fire* are the two most ge-  
 neral ways whereby the Bodies of the Dead  
 are destroy'd; for whether they are buried  
 or not buried, *Worms* devour those who by  
 the Custom of their Country are not burnt  
 with *Fire*: And perhaps he might refer to  
 the Words of *Isai. lxvi. 24.* where the Pro-  
 phet seems to foretel the Punishment of  
 those who will not receive the Gospel, when

**DISC.** it shall be preached to all Nations: *They*,  
**XX.** says he, (that is the true Israel, the Saints  
 of God, or Christians) they shall go forth and  
 look upon the Carcasses of the Men who have  
 transgressed against me, for their Worm shall  
 not die, neither shall their Fire be quenched,  
 and they shall be an Abhorrence to all Flesh.  
 'Tis highly probable that this is only a Meta-  
 phor referring to the Punishment of the  
 Souls of obstinate Unbelievers in Hell, for  
 it would be but a very small Punishment in-  
 deed, if only their dead Bodies were de-  
 vour'd by Worms or Fire, or rather no Pu-  
 nishment at all besides a Memorial of their  
 Sin.

2. Consider, the Gnawing of Worms and  
 the Burning of Fire are some of the most  
 smart and severe Torments that a living Man  
 can feel in the Flesh; therefore the Ven-  
 geance of God, upon the Souls of obstinate  
 Sinners, is set forth by it in our Saviour's  
 Discourse; and 'twas probably well known  
 amongst the Jews, as appears by some of  
 the apocryphal Writings, Judith xvi. 17.  
*Woe to the Nation that rises up against my*  
*Kindred; the Lord Almighty will take Ven-*  
*geance of them in the Day of Judgment, put-*  
*ting Fire and Worms in their Flesh, and they*  
*shall feel them and weep for ever.* And Ecclus.  
 vii. 16, 17. *Number not thyself among the*  
*Multitude of Sinners, but remember the Wrath*  
*will not tarry long. Humble thy Soul great-*  
*ly,*

ly, for the Vengeance of the Ungodly is Fire and Worms.

Disc  
XII.

3. Consider, whether *Worms* feed upon a living Man or devour his dead Body, still they are such as are bred in his own Flesh; but *Fire* is brought by other Hands, and applied to the Flesh: Even so this Metaphor of a *Worm* happily represents the inward Torments, and the teasing and vexing Passions which shall arise in the Souls of those unhappy Creatures, who are the just Objects of this Punishment; and it is called *their Worm*, that Worm that belongs to them, and is bred within them by the foul Vices and Diseases of their Souls: But the *Fire* which shall never be quenched refers rather to the Pains and Anguish which come from without, and that chiefly from the Hand of God, the righteous Avenger of Sin, and from his Indignation, which is compared to Fire.

## SECTION I.

*The Worm that dieth not.*

Let us begin with the first of these, viz. the Torments which are derived from the gnawing Worm, those Agonies and uneasy Passions which will arise and work in the Souls of these wretched Creatures, so far as we can collect them from the Word of God,  
from



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The Nature of the  
Vol. II.  
DISC. from the Reason of Things, and the work-  
ing Powers of human Nature.

When an impenitent Sinner is cast into Hell, we have abundant Reason to suppose, that the evil Temper of his Soul, and the vicious Principles within him, are not abated, but his natural Powers, and the Vices which have tainted them and mingle with them, are awaken'd and enrag'd into intense Activity and Exercise, under the first Sensations of his dreadful Punishment. Let us endeavour to conceive then what would be the Ferments, the raging Passions, and the vexing inward Torments of a wicked Man, seiz'd by the Officers of an Almighty Judge, borne away by the Executioners of Vengeance, and plunged into a Pit of Torture and smarting Misery, while at the same time he had a most fresh and piercing Conviction ever present, that he had brought all this Mischiefe upon himself by his own Guilt and Folly.

I. The first particular Piece of Wretchedness therefore, contain'd in this Metaphor, is the *Remorse and terrible Anguish of Conscience which shall never be relieved*. How terrible are the Racks of a guilty Conscience here on Earth, which arise from a Sense of past Sins? How does *David* cry out and roar under the Disquietude of his Spirit? *Psal. xxxii. 3. While I kept silence and confess'd not mine Iniquity, my Bones waxed old*

old through my roaring all the Day long, Day and Night thy Hand was heavy upon me, and my Moisture is turned into the Drought of Summer: And again, Psal. lxxviii. *4. Mine Iniquities are gone over mine Head, as an heavy Burden, they are too heavy for me.* God has wisely so framed the Nature and Spirit of Man, that a Reflection on his past Misbehaviour should raise such keen Anguish at his Heart; and thousands have felt it in a dreadful Degree, even while they have continued in this World, in the Land of Life and Hope.

But when Death has divided the Soul from this Body, and from all the Means of Grace, and cut off all the Hopes of pardoning Mercy for ever, what Smart beyond all our Thoughts and Expressions must the Sinner feel from such inward Wounds of Conscience? And it gives a twinging Accent to every Sorrow when the Sinner is constrain'd to cry out, *"It is I, it is I who have brought all this upon myself. Life and Death were set before me in the World where once I dwelt, but I refused the Blessings of eternal Life, and the Offers of saving Grace. I turn'd my Back upon the Ways of Holiness which led to Life, and renounced the Tenders of divine Mercy: I chose the Paths of Sin, and Polly, and Madness, though I knew they led to everlasting Misery and Death."*

**DISC.** "Death. Wretch that I was, to chuse  
**XII.** "those Sins, and these Sorrows, though I  
 "knew they were necessarily join'd toge-  
 "ther! I am sent into those Regions of  
 "Misery which I chose for myself, against  
 "all the kind Admonitions and Warnings  
 "of God and *Christ*, of his Gospel and his  
 "Ministers of Grace! O these cursed Eyes  
 "of mine, that led me into the Snares of  
 "Guilt and Folly! these cursed Hands that  
 "practis'd Iniquity with Greediness! these  
 "cursed Lips of mine, which dishonour'd  
 "my Maker! O these cursed Appetites and  
 "Passions, and this obstinate Will, which  
 "have wrought my Ruin! This cursed  
 "Body and Soul, that have procur'd their  
 "own everlasting Wretchedness!" These  
 Thoughts will be like a gnawing Worm  
 within, which will prey upon the Spirit  
 for ever. The fretting Smart arising from  
 this vexatious Worm must be painful in the  
 highest Extreme, when we know it is a  
*Worm which will never die*, which will for  
 ever hang at our Heart, and sting our Vitals  
 in the most tender and sensible Parts of  
 them without Intermission, as well as with-  
 out End.

Here on Earth the Stings and Scourges  
 of Conscience meet with some Intervals of  
 Relief, from necessary Business which em-  
 ploys the Mind, from gay Company which  
 diverts the Heart, from the Refreshments of  
 Nature



Nature by Day, or from the sweet Repose of the returning Night. But in the World to come every Hour shall be filled up with these eating Sorrows, for there is no Season of Refreshment, no Diversion of Mind, no Sleeping there: All Things are for ever awake in that World; there are no Shadows and Darkness to hide us where this Torment shall not find us; for it is bred and lives within. There is no Couch there to lull the Conscience into soft Repose, and to permit the Sufferer to forget his Agonies. Ancient Crimes shall rise up and stand for ever before the Eyes of the Sinner in all their glaring Forms, and all their heinous aggravating Circumstances: These will sit heavy upon the Spirit with teasing and eternal Vexation. O dreadful State of an immortal Creature, which must for ever be its own Tormentor, and shall know no Relief thro' all the Ages of its Immortality! Think of this bitter Anguish of Soul, O Sinner, to guard thee from Sin in an Hour of strong Temptation.

II. Another Spring of this Torment will be the *overwhelming Sense of an angry God, and utter Despair of his Love which is lost for ever.* It was the Thought of the Displeasure of God, which pierced the Soul of David with such acute Pain, when he remember'd his Sins, Psal. li. 3. 4. *My Sin is ever before me: Against thee, against thee only*

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**DISC.** *only have I sinned, and I have done this Evil in thy Sight:* And again he pleads with God,

**XII.** *Psalm. vi. 1. O Lord, chasten me not in thine Anger, nor vex me in thy sore Displeasure.* He could face an Host of armed Men without fear, but he could not face an angry God, whose loving Kindness is Life, and the loss of whose Love is worse than Death. *Psalm. lxxvii. 3. I remember'd God, said he, and was troubled, i. e. lest he should be favourable no more, and shut up his tender Mercies in everlasting Anger.* This was the Terror of that good Man, under a deep Sense of his Crimes, and of God hiding his Face from him, and this even while he was in the Land of the Living, and was not cast out beyond all Hope.

But when the Grave shuts its Mouth on the Sinner, and he is thrust out into utter Darkness, where the Light of God's Countenance never shines, nor will shine, how unsupportable must such Anguish be?

Here in this Life perhaps a profane Wretch has imagined he could live well enough *without God in the World*, and was content to have nothing to do with him in a way of Worship or Dependance here: He determined with himself, that the less he could think of God the better, and so forgot his Maker Days without number: But in those Regions of Hell, whither the Sinner shall be driven, he can never forget an angry God,

God, nor by out of the reach of his Ter- **Disc.**

**XII.**

“I am now convinced, said he, but  
 “that Happiness dwells in his Pre-  
 “sence, and Rivers of Pleasure flow at his  
 “Right Hand; but this Happiness I shall  
 “never see, these Streams of Pleasure I shall  
 “never taste; he is gone for ever with all  
 “his Love and with all his Blessings, God  
 “is gone with all his Graces and Pardons  
 “beyond my reach: He stands afar off  
 “from my Greetings. He told me of it  
 “before in the Ministry of his Word,  
 “but Wretch that I was! I would not  
 “hearken, I would not believe: I was invited  
 “by the Son of his Love to receive his Go-  
 “spel, and to partake of forgiving Mercy;  
 “he stretched out his Hands with divine  
 “Compassion, and offer’d to receive my  
 “Soul to his Grace, and to wash away my  
 “Defilements with his own Blood; he be-  
 “sought me to repent and return to God,  
 “and assured me he would secure his Fa-  
 “ther’s Favour to me, and a Place among  
 “the Mansions of his Glory: But cursed  
 “Rebel that I was, to despise this Salva-  
 “tion, and resist the Offers of such Love,  
 “and to renounce such divine Compassion!  
 “These Offers of Mercy are for ever finish-  
 “ed, I shall never see him more as sur-  
 “rounded with the Blessings of his Grace,  
 “but as the Minister of his Father’s Justice,  
 “VOL. II. P “ and



DISC. "and the Avenger of his abused Mercy.  
 XII. "There is no other Saviour, no other In-  
 "tercessor to procure divine Favour for me,  
 "and my Hopes are overwhelmed and bu-  
 "ried in the eternal Despair of his Love."  
 III. There will be found also among the  
 Damned a constant Enmity, and Malice,  
 and Hatred against the blessed God, which  
 can never satisfy nor ease itself by Revenge.  
 It seems very strange indeed that a Creature  
 should design Revenge against his Maker;  
 but thus it is in these dismal Regions of Hell:  
 Every wicked Man is by Nature at Enmity  
 with God, and in a State of Rebellion; and  
 when this Enmity is wrought up to Malice,  
 under a Sense of his punishing Hand, then  
 arises that cursed and detestable Desire in the  
 Soul of revenging itself against its Maker.  
 The fallen Angels, those wicked Spirits,  
 have found this dismal Temper of Mind  
 reigning in them: They hate the blessed  
 God with intense Malice, because his go-  
 verning Justice sees fit to punish their Pride  
 and other Iniquities, and they would fain be  
 revenged of him by destroying Mankind who  
 were made after his Image: Their Malice  
 cannot reach him in the Heighths of his  
 Glory, but they can reach Man his Creature  
 made in his Likeness, and they began to  
 take their Revenge there near six thousand  
 Years ago. All the Sins, and all the Mis-  
 eries of the Sons and Daughters of Adam,  
 from

from the Beginning of the World to this **DISC.**  
 Day, are owing to this Madness of Malice, **XII.**

this Hatred of God in the Hearts of evil Angels, who were cast out from Heaven and the Regions of Happiness: They began to exert this Malice early, and still they are everlasting Tempters of Men, in order to avenge themselves upon a righteous God.

But alas, what a wretched Satisfaction must the damned Spirits of Men propose to themselves in such a wild and extravagant Attempt? The very Name and Mention of this Iniquity seems to put our Souls and our Ears to pain, while we dwell in Flesh and Blood; but as cursed and hateful a Temper as this is, it is the very Spirit and Temper of Apostate Angels; and this will be thy Temper and thy Spirit, O wilful and impenitent Sinner, when thou shalt have obstinately sinned thyself into Damnation, and canst never deliver thyself from the punishing Hand of God.

Think, O my Soul, at what a dreadful Distance such Creatures must be from every Glimpse of Peace and Happiness, whose Hearts are filled with such Blasphemy and Rage, and who would be attempting such vain and insipious Efforts of mingled Insolence and Madness. Read, O ye foolish and wilful Transgressors, read the Temper and Conduct of Devils in their Spite and Opposition to every thing of God, thro' all

DISC. the Books of the Old Testament and the  
XII. New, and remember and think, that such

will your Temper be when you also shall be banished from the Presence of God for your wilful Rebellions, as the fallen Angels are, and be for ever shut out from all the Blessings of his Love, and all Hope of his Favour.

IV. A further Spring of continued Torment is *such fixed and eternal Hardness of Heart as will never be softened, such Impenitence and Obstinacy of Soul which will never relent or submit.* The hardest Sinner here on Earth may now and then feel a relenting Moment, and the most daring Atheist may sometimes have a softening Thought come across him, which may perhaps bring a Tear into his Eyes, and may form a good Wish or two in his Soul, and wring a Groan from his Heart which looks like Repentance, but when we are dismissed from this Body, and this State of Trial and of Hope, eternal Hardness seizes upon the Mind. The Neck is like an iron Sinew harden'd more (as it may so express it) in the Fire of Hell. The Will is fixed in everlasting Obstinacy against God, and against the Glories of his Holiness. If Moses and the Prophets, if Christ and his Apostles in the Ministry of the Word could not soften the Heart of bold Transgressors, what can be expected when all the Means of Grace and the Methods of



of divine Compassion are vanished and gone for ever. DISC. XII.

It is granted indeed there will be bitter Repentance among the Damned in Hell, and inward Vexation of Soul and Self-cursing in abundance, for having plunged themselves into this Misery, and having abandoned all the Offers of divine Mercy: But it will be only such a Repentance as Judas the Traitor felt, when he repented and hanged himself: This is a sort of Madness of Rage within them for having made themselves miserable. But there will be found no Hatred of the Evil of Sin, as it is an Offence against God, no painful and relenting Sense of their Iniquity, as it has dishonour'd God and broken his Law, no such Sorrow for Sin as is attended with an hearty Aversion to it, and a Desire to love God and obey him; but rather they will feel and nourish a growing Aversion to God and his Holiness.

Ask yourselves, my young Friends, Did you never feel your Hearts indulging an angry and unrelenting Mood, and stubborn in your Wrath against a Superior who had sharply reproved you? Or have you never felt an obstinate and unreconcilable Hour in your younger Years, even against a Parent who had severely corrected you? Or have you not found, at some Seasons, your Soul rising and kindling into violent Resentment and a

revenge-

DISC. revengeful Temper against your Neighbour  
 XII. upon some supposed Affront, Damage, or  
 ~~~~~ Mischief he had done you? Call these un-  
 happy Minutes to Mind, and learn what
Hell is: Think into what a wretched Case
 you would be plunged, if this Wrath and
 Stubbornness, this Enmity and Hardness
 should become immortal and unchangeable,
 though it were but against a Neighbour:
 But if this Obstinacy and stubborn Hard-
 ness of Soul were bent against God himself,
 so that you would never relent, never sin-
 cerely repent of your Crimes, nor bow, nor
 melt, nor yield either to his Majesty or his
 Mercy, what would you think of yourselves
 and of your State? Would you not be
 wretched and horrible Creatures indeed,
 without the least Reason to hope for Favour
 and Compassion at his Hands? Such is the
 Case probably of every damned Sinner. A-
 mazing Scene of complicated Misery and
 Rebellion! A guilty Spirit which cannot re-
 pent! A rebellious Spirit which cannot sub-
 mit, even to God himself! A harden'd Soul
 that cannot bend nor yield to its Maker!
 Must not such a Wretch be for ever the Ob-
 ject of its own inward Torment, as well as
 of divine Punishment? O the hopeless and
 dreadful State of every bold Transgressor,
 that is gone down to Death without true Re-
 pentance; for, sincere and true Repentance
 for having offended God, and ingenuous Re-
 lentings

sentings of Heart for Sin are never found in those Regions of future Misery! NO KINDLY XII.

Meltings of Soul toward God are ever known there.

There will be also intense Sorrow and wild Impatience at the Loss of present Comforts, without any Recompence, and without any Relief. If this World, O sinful Creature, with the Riches, or the Honours, or the Pleasures of it be all thy chosen Happiness, what universal Grief and Vexation will overspread all the Powers of thy Nature, when thou shalt be torn away from them all, even from all thy Happinesses by Death, and have nothing come in the room of them, nothing to relieve thy piercing Grief, nothing to divert or amuse this Vexation, nothing to soothe or ease this eternal Pain at the Heart?

And yet further, when thou shalt be as the Prophet speaks, *like a wild Bull in a Net*, struggling and tossing to and fro to free thyself on all sides, when thou shalt be racked with inward Fretfulness and Impatience, and full of the Fury of the Lord that made thee, and the Rebuke of that God that punishes thee, *Esai. li. 20.* Then shall thy Heart, hard as it is in an obstinate Course of Sin, be ready to burst and break, not with Penitence, but Madness and over-swelling Sorrows: And yet it must not break nor dissolve, but will remain firm and hard for ever to suffer these Pangs. This is and

DISC. must be an eternal Heart-ache, for there are
 XII. no broken Hearts in Hell in any Sense what-
 soever. There the Eyes are weeping, and
 the Hands are wringing, and the Tongue
 almost dried with long Wailings and Out-
 cries, and the Teeth gnashing with Madness
 of Thought: This is our Saviour's frequent
 Representation of Hell, *There shall be weep-
 ing, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth;*
 and yet the Heart ever living and ever ob-
 stinate, to supply fresh Springs of these Sor-
 rows, and to feel the Anguish of them all.

VI. There will be also *raging Desires of
 Ease and Pleasure which shall never be sa-
 tisfy'd*, together with *perpetual Disappoint-
 ment and endless Confusion* thrown upon all
their Schemes and their Efforts of Hope. It
 is the Nature of Man, while it continues in
 Being, that it must desire Happiness, and
 make some Efforts towards it: And some
 Divines have supposed, that Men of wicked
 Sensuality and Luxury in this World, have
 so drenched their Souls in fleshly Appetite
 by indulging their Lusts, and placing their
 chief Satisfaction and Happiness therein, that
 they will carry this very Temper of Sensu-
 ality with them into the World of Spirits;
 and 'tis possible their raging Appetites to this
 sensual Happiness, may be increased while
 there are no Objects to gratify them: Now
 if this be the Case, it must be intense and
 constant Misery to feel eternal Hunger with

no Bread to relieve it; keen Desire of Dainties with no luxurious Dishes to please their humorous Taste; eternal Thirst without one Drop of Wine or Water to allay or cool it; eternal Fatigue and Weariness without Power to sleep, and eternal Lust of Pleasure without any Hope of Gratification.

But if we should suppose these Sensualities shall die together with the Body, yet this is certain, the Soul will have everlasting Appetites of its own, i. e. the general Desire of Ease and Happiness, and of some satisfying Good: But God, who is the only true Source of Happiness to Spirits, the only satisfying Portion of Souls, is for ever departed and gone; and thus the natural Appetite of Felicity will be ever wakeful and violent in damned Spirits, while every Attempt or Hope to satisfy it will meet with perpetual Disappointment.

Milton, our great English Poet, has represented this Part of the Misery of Devils in a beautiful manner. He supposes that ever since they tempted Man to Sin by the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, they are once a Year changed into the Form of Serpents, and brought by Millions into a Grove of such Trees, with the same golden Appearance of Fruit upon them: And while with eager Appetite they seize those fair Appearances to allay their Thirst and Hunger, instead of Fruit they chew nothing but bitter Ashes,

DISC. Ashes, and reject the hateful Taste with
 XII. spattering Noise; and still they repeat their
 Attempts with shameful Disappointment,
 till they are vexed, and tormented, and torn
 with meagre Famine, and then are permitted
 to resume the Shape of Devils again.
 And why may we not suppose that the
 Crimes, of which the wicked Children of
 Men have been guilty in the present Life,
 may be punished with some such kind of
 Pain and Confusion, both of Body and Soul,
 as is here represented in this poetic Emblem
 or Parable?

VII. Another Misery of damned Creatures is, that *vexing Envy which arises against the Saints in Glory, and which shall never be appeased or gratify'd.* The Blessed in Heaven shall be for ever blessed, and the Envy of Devils and of damned Souls shall never hurt their Felicity, nor see their Joys diminished. This vile Passion of those cursed Spirits therefore against the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, though it rage never so high, is only preying upon their own Hearts, and increasing their own inward Anguish.

Let us imagine how many thousand holy Souls are arrived safe at Paradise, who were surrounded with mean and low Circumstances here upon Earth, while their haughty Lords, and their rich insolent Neighbours, have sinned themselves into Hell: And do you think those Children of Pride can ever
 bear

hear this Sight without Envy? How many **DISC.**
 Martyrs have ascended to Glory from Racks, **XII.**
 and Tortures, and Fires, here upon Earth,
 while their bloody and cruel Persecutors
 have been working out their own Dama-
 tion by these inhuman Acts of Murder and
 Cruelty? And will not these Wretches,
 under their righteous Sufferings and Punish-
 ments in Hell, envy the Creatures whom
 they have scorned, and oppressed, and mur-
 dered here on Earth, when they shall see
 them placed on high Seats in the Kingdom
 of Heaven, and themselves cast into utter
 Darkness?

And what does all this Envy do but in-
 crease their own Wretchedness? They are
 distracted with Pride and Rage to think of
 these high Favours of the blessed God be-
 stow'd on Creatures, whom they treated
 once with utmost Disdain: But their Envy,
 like a Viper, preys upon their own Entrails,
 and shall never be allay'd or made easy:
 They send a thousand Curses up to the hea-
 venly World; but the Saints are for ever
 secured in Happiness under the Eye of God
 their heavenly Father, and the Care of Je-
 sus their Almighty Friend.

O what a painful Plague must this Envy
 be, when with all her invenom'd Whips
 and Stings she does but scourge and torment
 the Heart where she dwells? What an un-
 speakable Torture must it be to feel this
 Envy

DISC. Envy so violent and so constant, that it gives itself no Ease thro' everlasting Ages?

XII. Who is there that dwells in Flesh and Blood can conceive or express the Horror and the twinging Agonies that arise from such a hateful Passion, fermenting and raging thro' all the Powers of the Soul?

VIII. The last Thing I shall mention, as Part of those Punishments of Hell which affect the Spirit, is a *perpetual Expectation and Dread of new and increasing Punishments without End*; and it is highly probable, that this shall be the Portion of Multitudes. When the Souls of the Saints are released by Death, and arrive at the blessed Regions, they are not vested with all their brightest Glories in a Moment, nor fixed in the highest Point of Knowledge and Happiness at their first Entrance; but as their Knowledge and their Love increases, so their Capacities are enlarged to take in new Scenes and new Degrees of Pleasure, and 'tis probable that their Felicity shall be ever increasing. And in the same manner, it is not unlikely, that the increasing Sins, the growing Wickedness, and mad Rebellion of damned Spirits, may bring upon them new Judgments and more weighty Vengeance. So it was with *Pharaoh* the *Egyptian* Tyrant, when he remained obstinate and rebellious against the Messages of God by *Moses*, even while he and his Nation lay under smarting Scourges of the Almighty:

Almighty: How did his Plagues increase with his Iniquities? And he may be set before us as an Emblem of Sinners, and their sufferings, under the Wrath of God in Hell, as in *Rom. ix. 27. 18.* And perhaps as the Wicked of this World when they die, have left evil and pernicious Examples behind them, or have corrupted the Morals of their Neighbours by their Exhortations, or their Commands, or by their wicked Influence of any kind, so their Punishment may be increased in proportion to the lasting Effects of their vile Example, or their vicious Influences. And perhaps too, there are none among all the Ranks of the Damned, whose Souls will be filled so high with the Dread and Horror of increasing Woes, as Ioud and profane Writers, profane and immoral Princes, or cruel Persecutors of Religion. *Jeroboam*, the King, not only sinned himself grievously, but *who made Israel to sin*, as the Scripture frequently expresses it with an Emphasis, by setting up the Idolatry of Calves in the Land. *1 Kings xiv. and xv. and xvi.* His Ghost stood fair for such an Increase of Torment, from Age to Age, as his Idolatry prevailed further in the Land. And all the wanton Poets, and the vile Persecutors, whether of *Heathen* or of *Christian* Name, whose Writings, whose Example, or whose Laws have convey'd and propagated their Wickedness from Age to Age.

DISC. Age after their Decense, will be some of these
XII. wretched Expectants of new and increasing
 Punishment.

Have a Care, O ye witty and ye mighty Sinners! have a Care of setting vile Temptations and bad Examples before the Men of your Age! have a Care of spreading the Contagion of your Vices around you by the Softness and the Force of your Allurements! Have a Care of establishing Iniquity by a Law, and propagating loose and wicked Opinions, or of encouraging Persecution for Conscience-sake! Take heed lest the cursed Influence of your Crimes should descend from Generation to Generation, among the Living long after you are dead, and should call for new and sharper Strokes from the punishing Hand of the Almighty!

But suppose there were nothing else but the long dreadful View of the Eternity of their present Miseries, with an everlasting Despair of Ease or Deliverance, this would add unspeakably to their Torment: The constant Sensation of what they feel now, and the Dread of what they must feel, is sufficient to make their Wretchedness intolerable.

If all these Springs of Misery which I have already mention'd are, and will be found in the Souls of damned Sinners, there is no need of more to make them exquisitely miserable: And yet since their Bodies shall be
 raised

raised from the Dust, in order to be join'd **DISC.**
 with their Souls in Punishment, as they **XII**
 were united in Sin, why may we not sup-
 pose that the Great God will create Bodies
 for them of such an unhappy Mould and
 Consistence, as shall be another perpetual
 Source of Pain and Anguish? What if their
 Bodies shall be rais'd with all the Seeds of
 Disease in them, like the Gout or the Stone,
 or any more smarting Malady? And what
 if the Smart of these bodily Distempers
 should mingle with the raging Passions of
 the Mind, as far as it is consistent with Im-
 mortality and everlasting Duration? Who
 can say, that when God exerts his Power,
 and makes his Wrath known, in punishing
 obstinate, rebellious and impenitent Sinners,
 as Rom. ix. he will not frame such Bodies
 for them to dwell in, as shall be a hateful
 Burthen, and an incessant Plague to them
 through all Ages of their Duration? And
 perhaps these bodily Pains may be also in-
 cluded in the Metaphor of a *gnawing Worm*
 bred within them, *which shall never die,*
which shall never cease to fill them with
grievous Anguish.

Here perhaps it may be enquired, Are
 there not Multitudes of Men in this World,
 who are not Sinners of the grosser kind, but
 have lived, in the main, in the Practice of
 common social Duties, and have maintain'd
 the usual Forms of Religion, according to
 the

DISC. the outward Rules of the Gospel, and the Custom of their Nation, but they have been negligent indeed of any sincere Repentance towards God, and have been Strangers to inward vital Religion throughout their whole Course? Shall these Creatures, who seem to stand in a sort of indifferent Character, who are outwardly blameless, with regard to common Morality, and have exercised the common Virtues of Justice and Benevolence towards their Fellow-Creatures, perhaps under the Influences of Education or Custom, or perhaps by the Effect that Reason or Philosophy, or their inward Fears have had toward the Restraint of their Passions and Appetites; I say, shall such sort of Creatures as these be filled with those Furies of Rage and Resentment against God, Envy and Malice toward their Fellow-Sinners, and all the vile and unsociable Passions in these Regions of Misery which they have never found working in them here on Earth, or but in a low Degree? Shall all the Torments and inward Anguish of Soul that you have been describing, fall upon this Rank of Sinners, whom the Eye of the World could hardly distinguish from good Men, and who were very far from the Character of wicked?

I answer, 1st, That however there may seem to be three sorts of Persons in our Esteem, *viz.* the Good, the Bad, and the Indifferent, yet the Word of God seems to acknowledge

acknowledge but two sorts, (*viz.*) *Those who* DISC.
fear God and serve him, and those who fear him XII.
not, Mal. iii. 18. Those who have acted from
 Principles of inward Religion, or the Love of
 God, and those who had no such Principle
 within them: And therefore the Scripture
 reveals and declares but two sorts of States
 in the future World, (*viz.*) that of *Re-*
wards and Punishments, or that of *Hap-*
piness and Misery: And as God the righte-
 ous Judge is intimately acquainted with all
 the secret Principles and Workings of every
 Heart, he alone knows who have practised
 Virtue sincerely from pious Principles, and
 who have had no such Principles within
 them. He well distinguishes who they are
 that have comply'd with the Rules of the
 Dispensation under which they have lived,
 or who have not comply'd with it: And
 such as may have the good Esteem of Men
 may be highly offensive to God, who knows
 all Things, and may be worthy of his final
 Punishment; *the Judge of the whole Earth*
will do right *.

And

* It has been the Opinion of some Writers in elder and in
 later Times, that the vast Numbers of indifferent Persons, who
 have neither been evidently holy or evidently wicked, shall
 be sent to a new State of Trial in the other World; but I can
 find nothing of this Doctrine in the Bible, nor any Hint of it,
 unless in that obscure Text of St. Peter, Eph. i. ch. iii. 19.
 where Christ is said to go and preach to the Spirits of those
 Sinners who were drown'd in the Flood of Noab, which may be
 construed to another Sense with Truth and Justice.

DISC. And since he has declared it to be his
 XII. Rule of Judgment, that *he will reward*
every one according to their Works, and it
 shall be much more tolerable for some of
 those Creatures than it shall be for others,
 by reason of their lesser Crimes, or their
 nearer Approaches to Virtue and Piety, so it
 is certain he will act in perfect Justice and
 Equity towards every Criminal, and none
 shall be punished above their Demerits, tho'
 no impenitent Sinner shall go unpunished.

We do not therefore imagine that every
 condemned Criminal shall have the same
 Degree of inward raging Passions, the same
 Madness and Fury against God and their
 Fellow-Creatures, nor the same Anguish of
 Conscience as those who have been more
 grossly and obstinately wicked and vicious,
 and have wilfully refused and renounced the
 well-known Offers of Grace and Salvation:
 There are innumerable Degrees of inward
 Punishment and Pain, according to the De-
 grees of Sin.

Answ. 2. It should be added too, that
 that World of Punishment is also a World
 of increasing Wickedness, and those that
 have had some natural Virtues and some
 Appearances of Goodness here, may and
 will renounce it all in the World to come,
 where they find themselves punished for
 their Impenitence and Irreligion, and their
 criminal Neglect of God and Godliness:
 And

And the least and lightest of the Punish- DISC
ments of damned Souls will be terrible XII.
enough, and yet not surpass the Desert of
their Offences. They have been all in greater
or less Degrees treasuring up Food for this
immortal *Worm*, and Fuel for this *Fire*,
which is unquenchable.

Besides, it may be added here, that in
Threatnings the holy Scripture generally ex-
presses them in their highest Degrees and
most formidable Appearances, on purpose to
secure Men from coming near the Peril and
Border of them.

This shall suffice to explain the first Part
of the Metaphor in my Text, *i. e. The
Worm that dieth not.*

SECTION II.

The Fire which shall not be quenched.

I proceed now to consider the *second Part*
of the Description of *Hell* in the *Nature* of
it, as it is represented by our Saviour, and
that is, that *the Fire is never quenched.*

Fire signifies the Medium or Instrument
of Torture *from without*, which God has
threatened to employ in the Punishment of
guilty Creatures, even as the *gnawing Worm*
signifies their *inward* Torment. Fire ap-
plied to the sensible and tender Parts of the
Flesh, gives the sharpest Pain of any Thing
that comes within our common Notice, and

DISC. is used in Scripture to signify the Punish-
XII. ments of damned Sinners, and the Wrath
 of God in the World to come: And per-
 haps that Text is the Foundation of it,
Isa. xxx. last Verse, *Tophet is ordained of
 old, he has made it deep and large, the Pile
 thereof is Fire and much Wood, and the
 Breath of the Lord, like a Stream of Brim-
 stone, doth kindle it.* This Tophet was a
 Place in the Valley of Hinnom, where Chil-
 dren were wont to be burnt in Sacrifice to
 the Idol *Moloch*; and from these Hebrew
 Words, *Hell* in the New Testament is called
Geenna, because of the burning Torture and
 the terrible Shrieks of dying Children in
 this Valley of Hinnom.

This Description of *Hell* by *Fire* is used
 by our Saviour and his Apostles, in their
 Speeches and Writings on this Subject. *Hell*
Fire is mention'd six Times in six Verses
 where my Text lies; the last Sentence of
 Judgment passed upon Sinners, as it is re-
 presented by our Saviour, is express'd in the
 same Language, *Matth. xxv. 4.* *Depart, ye
 Cursed, into everlasting Fire.* The Apostle
Paul speaking of the Return of *Christ*, *2*
Thess. i. 8. asserts, that *he shall appear in*
flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them that
know not God, and that obey not the Gospel.
 And in *Rev. xiv. 10, 11.* as well as in other
 Parts of this Book, the final Punishments of
 Sinners is represented by *Fire and Brimstone*,
 as the Instruments of their Torment.

'Tis true indeed, Spirits or Beings which have no Body cannot feel burning by material Fire, unless they are united to some sort of material Vehicles; but that God will use material Fire to punish obstinate and rebellious Sinners hereafter at the Resurrection, is not improbable, tho' 'tis very hard to say with full Assurance: Since the Bodies of the Wicked are to be raised again, it is not at all unlikely that their Habitation shall be a Place of Fire, and their Bodies may be made immortal to endure the Smart and Torture without consuming. Did not this God, by his Almighty Power and Mercy, preserve the Bodies of *Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego* in the burning Furnace of *Nebuchadnezzar*, so that the Fire had no Power to consume or destroy them? And cannot his Power do the same thing under the Influence of his Justice as well as of his Mercy? May they not be maintain'd for ever in their Existence to endure the appointed and deserved Vengeance? If the blessed God has with much long-suffering borne with these Vessels of Wrath, under their repeated Oppositions to his Law and Gospel, and they still go on in their Vice, Obstinacy and Impenitence, and have fitted themselves for Destruction, surely he will make his Wrath and Power known in their Punishment, as *St. Paul* expresses it, *Rom. ix.* and when the Power and Wrath of a God unite to punish a Creature, how miserable must that Creature be!

DISC. 'Tis certain, that God has been pleased
 XII. in his Word frequently to make use of *Fire*,
Brimstone, *Burning*, *Smoke*, *Darkness*, and
Chains, and every thing that is painful and
 noisome to Nature on Earth, in order to re-
 present the Miseries that he has prepared
 for Sinners in Hell: And we must suppose
 that all these Metaphors, if they are but
 mere Metaphors, carry with them a Sense
 of most intense Pain and Anguish with
 which God will afflict the Bodies, as well
 as the Spirits of those guilty Creatures, who
 have rebelled against his Majesty, rejected his
 Mercy, and exposed themselves to his Indig-
 nation. But what particular Instruments and
 Methods of Punishment, what other Ele-
 ments or Means of Torture the Great God will
 make use of to execute his Sentence in this
 tremendous Work, is more than we can
 now declare, because God has not fully de-
 clared it: And I pray God none of us may
 be ever doomed to learn it by terrible Ex-
 perience. But if there be nothing but *Fire*,
 the Anguish will be intolerable, as one of
 our Poets expresses it,

*In liquid Burnings, or in dry, to dwell,
 Is all the sad Variety of Hell.*

Or what if the Almighty, who has all
 Nature, with all its Powers, at his Com-
 mand, should employ other material In-
 struments for the Execution of his deserved
 Wrath?

Wrath? What if he should chuse the at-DISC-
tornate Extremes of Fire and Frost, as some NM.
have imagin'd, to torment those impenitent
Criminals? Or what if the Creatures, which
they have abus'd to their impious and brutish
Purposes, should be made Instruments and
Mediums of their Punishment? Wine may
be render'd a frequent Means of Sickness,
Agony and Pain to the Drunkard, and Meat
and other Dainties to the Glutton, and Gold
to the covetous Wretches who made Gold
their God, that they may all remember their
Crimes in their Sufferings. The Wisdom of
God will execute the Sentence of his Justice
in the most honourable manner.

And after all, if we call away our Thoughts
from Fire, and every material Instrument of
Pain, which the Great God may employ in
punishing obstinate Rebels, and survey only
those acute and dreadful Impressions of Hor-
ror and Anguish, which a just and holy God
may make on sinful Spirits in an immediate
manner in Hell, this would overwhelm our
Souls with unsupportable Agonies: *Who*
knows the Power of thine Anger? for accord-
ing to thy Fear so is thy Wrath, says Moses,
Psal. xc. Our Fears do not rise above those
Evils which the Wrath of God will inflict.
Who knows what are those *Arrows of the*
Almighty, of which Job speaks, *the Poison*
whereof drank up his Spirits, and those *Ter-*
rors of God which set themselves in Array
against him? Who knows what our Sa-

DISC. viour felt in the Hour of his Agony and
 XII. Atonement for our Sins, which made him
 sweat Drops of Blood? And what sort of
 terrible Impressions God himself may make
 of his own Wrath and Vengeance, on the
 Heart of such Criminals as wilfully reject
 his Salvation, is beyond our Thoughts to
 conceive, or our Language to express.

Thus much shall suffice concerning the
 Metaphor of *Fire*, and the Hand of God
 himself in kindling this Fire for the Execu-
 tion of his Sentence against Impenitents. But
 since I have enter'd so far into this Subject,
 I cannot think it proper intirely to finish it,
 without giving notice of some different and
 dreadful Additions to their Torment which
 will arise from *evil Angels*, and from their
Companions in Sin and Misery among the
Children of Men: For in the Agonies of our
 Saviour, Men and Devils join'd together to
 afflict him, when it pleased the Father to
 bruise him, and to make his Soul an Offering
 for our Sins.

I. *Evil Angels, wicked and unclean Spi-
 rits, with all their furious Dispositions and
 active Powers, will increase the Misery of
 the Damned.* They paved the way to Hell
 for Man by the first Temptation of our Pa-
 rents in Paradise, and they have been ever
 since busy in tempting the Children of Men
 to sin, and they will be hereafter as busy in
 giving them Torment. When these wicked
 Spirits, O Sinner, who have taken thee as

a willing Captive by their Baits and Devices DISC
in this World, when they have led thee XII.
down through the Paths of Vice to the Re-
gions of Sorrow, they will begin then to
insult thee with hateful Reproaches, and to
triumph over thee with Insolence and Scorn.
When they have deceived thee on Earth, to
thy own Perdition, they will make thee the
Object of their bitter Ridicule and Mockery
in Hell.

O could we turn aside the Veil of the in-
visible World, and hold the bottomless Pit
open before you, what bitter Groans of
Ghosts would you hear, not only oppress'd
and agonizing under the Wrath of a right-
eous God, but also under the Insults of
cruel Devils? *As there is Joy among the An-
gels of Heaven when a Sinner repents,* or
when a Soul arrives safely at those blessed
Mansions; so when a rebellious and obsti-
nate Criminal is sent down to Hell, you
would hear the Triumphs of those malici-
ous Spirits over him, with the Voice of in-
sulting Pride and hellish Joy: And while
they domineer over you, and tear you as
roaring Lions, who seek and tear their Prey,
you will curse yourselves a thousand Times
for hearkening to their deceitful Allurements.
You will vent your Rage against yourselves
at the same time that they scoff at you as eter-
nal Fools, who have lost a God, and a Hea-
ven, and immortal Happiness, by your own
Madness

DISC. Madness and Folly in hearkening to their
 XII. Temptations.

II. The *mutual Upbraidings of Fellow-Sinners and Fellow-Sufferers among the Children of Men, will aggravate your Wretchedness Day and Night without End.* Those who drew each other into foul Iniquities, shall fill the Ears of each other with loud and sharp Reproaches for their mutual Influence on both their Ruin, and shall charge their Damnation, and all their heavy Sorrows, as a heavy Load on each other's Souls. Some of those who have been join'd in the nearest Ties of Kindred and Friendship, while they dwelt in Flesh and Blood, shall be the terrible Instruments of their keenest Remorse and Vexation, and tease their Spirits with endless Upbraidings.

Here the *Sons of Pride*, that most hateful Iniquity, shall be overwhelm'd with huge Mortification and Disdain: The mighty Sinner shall be insulted by the meanest of the Croud, and Princes shall be bearded and affronted by those gay Slaves of the Court, whom they once employ'd in flattering and adoring them. They were once vain enough to believe, they were something more than mortal; but now they are spurned by those very Flatterers with a Foot of Contempt, and their eternal Pride still swelling, gives their own Hearts new Stings and Twinges at every Resentment. None but a proud and
 haughty

haughty Creature here in this World, who has sometimes met with Scorn and Insult from his Inferiors, can speak feelingly of the exquisite Sensibility of these Torments of Soul in Hell. DISC. XII.

But besides this, there are many Sinners who lived in Malice, and who died with their Hearts full of Revenge against their Fellow Sinners; and when they shall meet them in those deplorable Regions, how natural is it to suppose they will endeavour to execute this Revenge upon them without End and without Mercy? For it may be easily supposed that Malice, Revenge, and Cruelty, which are the proper Character of Devils, shall not be abated among the Children of Men, when they are grown so near akin in their Tempers to those evil Spirits, and are now for ever mingled amongst them.

And yet further, who knows what the Damned in Hell shall endure from the endless Brawls and bitter Quarrels amongst themselves? What new Contentions will arise perpetually in such a Country, where it is perhaps the Practice and Custom of the Place, and the Nature of the Inhabitants, for the most part, to make every one of their Fellows as uneasy and as miserable as they can? O what mad and furious Pride, and Malice, and every hellish Passion, will be raging almost in every Bosom against all those who

DISC. who are near them; and this in a dark Prison
XII. where all are intensely tormented; and where
 there is no such thing as Compassion or sincere Love, nothing to sooth each other's Sorrows, but every thing that may add to the Smart and Anguish!

O that the present Survey of these Horrors of Soul, these complicated Distresses and Miseries from within us and without us, from every Quarter of Heaven and Hell, from the gnawing Worm within us, and from the Fire of the Wrath of God, and the mutual Insults, Railings and Injuries of Men and Devils, might all lie with its due Weight upon our Spirits now, while we are in the Land of Hope; that every one of us may be awaken'd to a timely Concern about our highest Interest, and hasten to make our Escape as Lot did from Sodom, lest the Sentence of Death be pronounced upon us while we delay, and the fiery Deluge overtake us.

But here I would tarry a little to answer a repeated *Objection*, (viz.) The Terror of this outward Punishment from the Hand of God, which is described by *avenging Fire*, is so severe and intolerable, that it awakens some lesser Criminals to raise the same Cavil against this *unquenchable Fire*, or God's punishing Hand, as was raised before against the *never-dying Worm*, or the inward Anguish of Soul arising from its own Conscience.

'Tis

DISC
XIII
'Tis possible some lesser Sinner, who has had more Appearances of Piety or Religion here on Earth, may rise and say, You have set the Punishments of Sin in a most horrible and tremendous Light, from this Metaphor of *Fire*, as well as from the deathless *Worm*: But surely this cannot be the Case, nor these the Sufferings which God will inflict on every wretched Creature in Hell. Are not the Punishments there proportion'd to the Offences? What if these sharpest and deepest Tortures and Horrors should be the Portion of the vilest Criminals, the most impious Rebels against God, the prophane and obstinate Abusers of Grace, the Scoffers at *Christ* and his Gospel, and the cruel Persecutors of all the Saints, yet will every Soul who had not quite Religion and Holiness enough to reach Heaven, be thus terribly tormented in Hell? Does not *Christ* himself tell us, and did you not allow before, that it shall be more tolerable for some Sinners than for others? And will there be no easier Abodes, no milder Regions, no kinder and more favourable Appointments for such as have had many good Wishes and Hopes, many friendly Exercises of Virtue towards Men, and some Workings of imperfect Piety toward God?

To this I answer, as before, 'Tis certain that every one shall be judged according to their Works, by an unerring Rule of Equity, and

DISC. and shall be punished according to the Ag-
XII. gravation of their Iniquities. But dost thou
 know, O Sinner, how great is that Punish-
 ment which the least Transgression against
 the Law of God deserves? One single Sin,
 which thou wilt not part with, will create
 unsufferable Misery. And though there may
 be other Criminals there of much more
 heinous and aggravated Guilt, Prophaness,
 and Rebellion than thine is, yet if thy Soul
 be filled with all that Torment which one
 Sin may create and deserve, there will be
 Hell enough around thee to make thy Dis-
 tress too terrible for thee to bear.

Besides, let it be remember'd, that what-
 soever Tendencies toward Piety, or Appear-
 ances of Goodness, might be found with thee
 in this World, all these will vanish and be
 lost, when once thy Day of Grace is finish-
 ed, and all the Means of Grace and Salva-
 tion are ended for ever. If thou hast re-
 fused the Proposals of Mercy, and continued
 in thy Sins without Repentance, and hast
 never accepted the Salvation of *Christ* while
 it was offer'd, all the Good *that thou seem'dst*
to have shall be taken from thee, Matt. xxv.
 29. or rather thy Heart itself will grow
 more hard, thy Will more obstinate against
 God, and every evil Passion will rise and
 prevail, and make thee perhaps as very a
 Devil as thy Companions in Guilt and Mi-
 sery. 'Tis for those who would not part
 with

with their beloved Sins, which were as dear **DISC.**
as *right Hands*, or as *right Eyes*, that the **XII.**
never-dying Worm and the *unquenchable Fire*
are prepared, as the Context itself informs
us in this Place.

And as the Worm of Conscience, even
for lesser Sins, will gnaw thy Heart with in-
tense Anguish, so the Vengeance of Divine
Fire will torment thee with exquisite Pain,
tho' thy Pain and thy Anguish shall not be
equal to what greater Criminals endure. But
'tis wise and kind in the blessed God to de-
nounce the Terrors and Sanctions of his
Law in their utmost Severity, to guard his
Law the better against every Transgression,
and to frighten and secure his Creatures from
Sin and Punishment.

Trifle not therefore, O Sinner, with the
Means of Mercy, and venture not upon lit-
tle Sins, in hope of little Misery, nor dare
to continue in an impenitent State without
God, without *Christ* and his Salvation, upon
a foolish Presumption that thy Sins are but
small, and thy Punishment shall be less than
others: For the least of those Sorrows will
be found greater than any mortal Creature
can bear, and therefore thou shalt be made
immortal to suffer them.

'Tis granted, there are many Mansions in
Hell, as well as in Heaven, but as the lowest
Mansion in Heaven is Happiness, so the easi-
est Place in Hell is Misery.

There

DI **BC** **and** **There** **is** **another** **Objection** **arises** **hence,**
II. **which** **it** **is** **necessary** **to** **give** **some** **Answer**
to, **viz.** **If** **the** **Punishments** **of** **Hell** **are** **so**
intense **and** **terrible,** **between** **the** **Worm** **of**
Conscience, **the** **Fire** **of** **God's** **Anger,** **and**
the **Malice** **of** **evil** **Spirits,** **surely** **it** **will** **work**
up **human** **Nature** **into** **Extasy** **and** **Madness;**
it **will** **take** **away** **all** **the** **regular** **Exercise** **of**
our **natural** **Powers;** **it** **will** **render** **us** **perhaps**
mere **passive** **miserable** **Beings,** **of** **keen** **Sen-**
sations **without** **reasoning.** **This** **is** **certain,**
that **such** **and** **so** **various** **Tortures** **would** **have**
that **Influence** **upon** **our** **Natures** **at** **present,**
and **why** **should** **it** **not** **hereafter?** **And** **will**
the **blessed** **God** **continue** **to** **punish** **Creatures**
when **their** **Reason** **is** **lost?** **What** **can** **such**
Punishments **avail?**

Answer, **surely** **God** **will** **not** **continue** **to**
punish **Madmen;** **therefore** **none** **of** **these**
Torments **shall** **extinguish** **our** **Reason,** **or**
destroy **our** **intellectual** **Powers;** **for** **it** **is** **as**
Creatures **of** **Reason** **and** **Free-will** **that** **Sin-**
ners **are** **thus** **punished,** **and** **therefore** **these**
Powers **must** **remain** **in** **their** **proper** **Exer-**
cise; **besides,** **the** **very** **Operations** **of** **these**
Powers **in** **Self-condemnation,** **and** **Self-up-**
braiding, **are** **Part** **of** **their** **Punishment.** **But**
whether **God** **will** **so** **fortify** **the** **Natures** **of**
the **Damned,** **which** **probably** **shall** **not** **be**
made **of** **Flesh** **and** **Blood,** **and** **enable** **them**
to **bear** **such** **intense** **Pain** **without** **Disfrac-**
tion, **or** **whether** **the** **highest** **Extreams** **of**
their

SECTION II. *Of the Punishments of Hell.*

That Torments shall only be inflicted at some certain Periods or Intervals, so that they shall still return to their reasoning Powers again with bitter Remembrance of what passed, this Matter is hard to determine, and because it is unwritten and unrevealed, I am silent. But it still remains that Punishment shall be so intense and severe, as becomes a God of Holiness and Justice to inflict on rebellious and obstinate Creatures.

SECTION III.

Reflections on the Nature of these Punishments.

'Tis time now that we should proceed to form some special *Reflections on the Nature of the Punishments of Hell*, such as they have been described in the foregoing Discourse.

The first is this, *What dreadful and unknown Evil is contain'd in the Nature of Sin which grows up into such Misery*, which breeds this stinging Worm in the Conscience, which prepares the Creature for such fiery Torments, and which provokes a God to inflict them? The *Vessels of Wrath* have prepar'd themselves for it, as the Apostle intimates, by their own Sins, *Rom. ix. 22. they are fitted for Destruction*: Nor does all the intense and infinite Anguish of this Punishment

DISC. nishment exceed the Desert of our Sins. The
XII. Great God, in a way of Bounty, may often
 bestow upon us vastly beyond what our
 little Services can ever pretend to have de-
 served, but he never punishes beyond our
 Deserts.

What a dangerous and pernicious Mistake
 is it in the Children of Men to sport with
 Sin, as with a harmless thing? 'Tis much
 safer sporting with a poisonous Serpent, or
 with burning Firebrands. The Serpent has
 many gay and pleasing Colours on its Skin,
 and appears a very charming Creature, which
 tempts Children and Fools to play with it.
 And the same Ignorance inclines them some-
 times to sport with Fire, because of its shin-
 ing Brightness: And till they are burnt with
 the Fire, or bit by the Serpent, they will
 not forsake their foolish Choice, nor be con-
 vinced of their Danger: Such is the Case
 and Temper of sinful Mortals: Their Senses
 indulge the pleasing Flatteries of Sin, and
 are fond of its tempting Amusements, till
 they feel the Smart of the Fire raging in
 their Bosoms, and the Adder stings them to
 Death. Thus the wise Man describes the
 Flatteries of Wine in the View of the Drun-
 kard, *Prov. xxiii. 31, 32.* But the same
 wise Man pronounces every one a Fool that
 makes a mock at Sin, or trifles with so for-
 midable a Mischief, *Prov. xiv. 9.*

How

How vain are the gay Fancies of flesh and blood Men in the Hour of Temptation, and how shocking and dreadful will be their Disappointment! They think the Descriptions of Sin, which are blown up and kindled into such Terror by the Lips of the Preacher, are but as Mock-fire which never burns; but the great Day of Vengeance which makes haste towards them, will terribly and eternally convince them of the fatal Mischief of it by the various Plagues that shall seize upon them. The living *Worm* shall gnaw their Consciences, and the *Fire* of God will torment their Spirits, and spread a raging Anguish through their whole Natures; and every twinging Accent of their Pain shall teach them, but with a terrible and hopeless Conviction, *what unspeakable Evil is contained in Sin.* They will then find what a fearful thing it is to fall into the Hands of the living God, who has a Right, and Power, and Will to punish, *Heb. x. 31.*

O that each of us might arrive at this holy Wisdom, to learn the dreadful *Evil* of Sin from this Bible; this Book of the divine Law and Grace, and not provoke the blessed God to teach us so necessary a Lesson by the Rod of his Vengeance! O that we could look upon every unlawful Action, and particularly every Sin against Conscience, as the Seed of that Worm which will gnaw our

DISC. Souls in Hell with intense Pain, as Part of
 XII. that Fuel which is kindling into a Flame to
 torment our Consciences for ever, and that
 under the powerful Influences of these Re-
 presentations of Sin we might fly to the ut-
 most Distance from it with Horror, and
 make our safe Escape!

Reflect. II. If the Punishments of Hell, appointed by the blessed God, carry so much Terror in them, *how much mistaken are the sinful Children of Men in the Ideas which they form of the Great and Blessed God?* This Representation of the Vengeance of the Lord in Hell may be of use to refute such mistaken Opinions.

Some have framed a God for themselves; not such as dwells in the Heavens, not such as he has described himself in his Word, but their vain Imagination has raised up an Idol made of mere Goodness and Mercy, without Holiness and Justice: 'Tis their own Self-love which forms this idle and foolish Image of the God that made them, because they do not like to think of falling under the Terror of his Power. They venture to affront him to his Face, they dare him to Vengeance; and as the Writer of the Book of Job expresses it, *they stretch out their Hands against God, they strengthen themselves against the Almighty, they run upon him with Insolence, and venture upon the thick*

Bosses of his Buckler, Job xv. 25. There are Multitudes in our Day that are arrived at such a dreadful Height of Impiety, as to call upon him for the Damnation of themselves, as well as of their Friends, in Sport and Merriment: They will not believe that the blessed God will ever be found so severe and formidable as Preachers describe him: And because Judgment is not speedily executed against the Men of Iniquity, therefore the Sons of Men have their Hearts set in them to do Mischief. Madness is in their Hearts, Eccles. viii. 11. and ix. 3. Because God delays his Indignation they will not believe he has any belonging to him, notwithstanding all the terrible Words by which he is represented by the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Son of God himself: And while they rush boldly on those Crimes which God has severely forbidden, they are ready to think God is just such an one as themselves, regardless of Virtue and Government, Psal. l. 21. And because they make nothing of Sin, they imagine God will make nothing of it.

O that the Sons of Men would once learn to know God better, for *there are many who have not the true Knowledge of God, I speak it to their Shame, when they fancy he is all made up of Gentleness and Forbearance, without Holiness and Justice! Alas, Sirs, these Attributes are as necessary in a God as*

DISC. Grace and Compassion; He is and he must be a wise, a righteous Governor of the World; and his Wisdom requires that impenitent Sinners should be punished, to secure the Honour of his Law, and to guard his Gospel from Contempt*. These awful Perfections of the blessed God are as necessary to vindicate his Authority and his Government from Insult and Rebellion, as his Goodness is needful to encourage sinful Creatures to repent and return to their Duty. The Word of God expressly tells us, he is a God of Holiness and a consuming Fire, Heb. xii. last; but there is many a Sinner that will never learn this Lesson till the Torments of Hell teach it him by dismal Experience. They have trifled with his Majesty, and mocked at his Threatnings all their Life, till at the Moment of Death he awakes like a Lion, and tears their Spirits with everlasting Anguish.

* A Governor made up of mere Goodness and Mercy could be no Governor at all; for it is absurd to call that a Government, where every Subject may do what Iniquity and Mischief he pleases with Impunity. The Laws of such a Government would cease to be Laws, and become mere Rules and Directions for living, which every one might observe or not, just according to his Inclination. To say that it becomes the Wisdom of God to threaten Offenders, but that his Goodness will interpose in the End and hinder the Punishment, is to say, that God is not wise, for if he were he would certainly have taken care not to let those Men into the Society. Bishop Hart's Sermons, p. 315.

I might take notice also in this Place, that there is another mistaken Notion of God, into which some Persons have unhappily fallen, as *though God were the Cause and Author of Sin*, and have spoken unadvisedly with their Lips, in such Language as borders too near upon Blasphemy. But 'tis evident, that a God, who will punish the Sins of Men with such intense Pain and Torment, can never be so inconsistent with himself as to be the Author or Cause of those Sins. 'Tis granted, that his universal Providence has a Concern in every thing that is transacted among Men; but since he has informed us in what a dreadful Manner he will execute his Vengeance against Sinners in the World to come, 'tis Insolence and Indignity against the blessed God to represent him as introducing Sin into our World. *Let God be true, tho' every Man be a Liar*; let God be pure, and righteous, and holy, tho' every Man be found guilty and criminal: *Otherwise, how shall God judge the World?* How can he inflict such Torments on rebellious Creatures, if he constrain or influence them to practise this Rebellion? All Opinions therefore, that allow of such an Inference, as *tho' God were the Author of Sin*, must be pronounced false and pernicious to Men, as well as injurious to the Justice of God; for these Notions throw a vile

DISC. Imputation on the blessed God, and charge
 XII. him with heinous Infidelity, to forbid the
 Commission of Sin by all these Tempers, and
 yet suppose him to influence Men to the
 Practice of them.

Reflect, III. *How reasonable is it for us to believe, that such a Hell, as I have described, is prepar'd for impenitent Sinners; since there are so many Appearances of the Beginnings of it here on Earth, so many Indications and Signs, and Forerunners of such Misery and Torment inflicted on sinful Men: Survey the remarkable Executions of God's Judgments on the World in several Ages and Nations; look back to our first Parents, who were thrust out of Paradise, the Garden of Pleasure, and banish'd from the Gates of it for ever, upon the Account of the first Sin, and the Entrance of it was guarded by a flaming Sword to forbid their Return. Behold the Flood of watry Vengeance in the Days of Noah breaking up from the vast Caverns of the Earth, and pouring down from the Windows of Heaven to punish Sin: Deep calls unto Deep in the tremendous Noise of these Water-spouts, which spread Death and Desolation over the Face of the whole Earth, because all Flesh had sinned against God their Creator. Turn your Eyes to Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities of the Plain, suffering the Vengeance*

of

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of Heaven with Lightning and devouring Fire bursting from the Clouds to punish the unnatural Crimes of that Country. See the fiery flying Serpents, as the Messengers of divine Anger, to punish the Rebellion of the Israelites in the Wilderness: Mark what Multitudes in the Camp of Israel received their mortal Sting, and were given up to Destruction and Death. Cast your Eyes abroad over the Nations, and what Records have we of all former Ages, which do not manifest the Vengeance of God pursuing the Iniquities of Men, by Wars, and Famines, and Pestilences, and every thing that is bitter and dreadful to human Nature. See Jerusalem, the City of God, all in Flames, and the whole Land of Judea laid desolate with deepest Distress, diffus'd and reigning among all the Inhabitants of it: Above a Million of them were actually slaughter'd and consumed by Famine and Sword, as a Sacrifice to the Anger of God, for their long Provocations, and the cruel barbarous Murder of his Son Jesus. And when you have taken all these Surveys, then tell me if such Terrors of the Lord do not give us sufficient Warning what unknown Agonies and Destructions may be expected by obstinate and impenitent Sinners from the Hand of God, when the utmost Limits of his Patience restrain his Wrath no longer, but his Wisdom

DISC. Wisdom gives a loose to all his fury. **Letig.**

XII.

To enforce this yet upon your Hearts, think again of all the Pains and Torments of Flesh and Spirit, which arise from the Dis-temperers of Body, and from the Anguish of Soul, even in this present State of Trial, this Land of Hope, this Season of Divine Long-suffering. Go to the Hospitals, where the Gout and Stone, and Rheumatism, and a thousand Maladies torture the Nerves and the Joints of Men with intolerable Smart, and infer thence what God will inflict both on the Flesh and Spirit, or the Soul and Body of Sinners, in the Day of his compleat Vengeance, when his Offers of Mercy and the Years of his Grace are come to their last Period. Go and survey the Fields of Battle and Slaughter, where thousands of the Dead and the Dying are mingled in confused Heaps, and groan out their Souls in long Anguish and extreme Torture, with Bruises and Wounds, and all the smarting Effects of the Instruments of War. Now if all these Things come under the Conduct of Divine Providence in a sinful World, which is yet in a way of Hope, what may those resolved and obstinate Rebels expect, when all the Doors of Hope are shut up for ever, and Providence has nothing to do on Earth or in Hell, but to execute the Vengeance of a God.

Shan

Shall we take one Step yet further, and think of the inward Pangs of Conscience, which some awaken'd Criminals have felt in this Life on the Account of Sin, when the Arrows of God have been shot into their Souls, and the Poison thereof lies drinking up their Spirits? Think what dreadful Ferments of Passion, and Rage, and Hatred of God have been found in the Hearts of some sinful Creatures, when they have grown mad with Revenge against God, and against themselves, and Envy against all their Fellow-Mortals, who are not in the same Circumstances; think yet again how terribly their Misery must be aggravated, when the Torture of everlasting Despair attends all the rest of the Pains and Sorrows they suffer; and then say, if the Description of a future Hell in the Word of God may not be true and real. What Anguish beyond all the Power of present Thought and Language, may seize all the Powers of wilful and impious Rebels against the Authority and the Mercy of God, when all the Stores of his Vengeance that have been treasuring up for many Years, shall be pour'd out upon them without any Mitigation or Mixture of Mercy.

Reflect. IV. 'Tis Matter of Surprise, and great Astonishment, that thousands and ten thousands of the sinful Children of Men, from Day

DISC. Day to Day, and from Year to Year, are
III walking on the Borders of all this Misery,
 and yet are so thoughtless and unconcerned
 about it. They carry peaceful and easy
 Minds in the midst of this dreadful Danger,
 and while they have all the Symptoms of
 the Children of Wrath upon them, they
 live without Fear, and make no Effort to-
 ward their Escape. Wretched Creatures in-
 deed! who have a mortal Disease upon them,
 that will breed this gnawing Worm of Con-
 science, that will grow up into all this An-
 guish and Distress, and yet are senseless of
 their own Peril, unacquainted with their
 own State of Soul, and are daily treading
 their earthly Rounds of Business and of Plea-
 sure with a merry Heart. All the heavy
 Artillery of Divine Vengeance is ready to be
 discharged upon them as soon as the Door
 of Death opens and lets them into the in-
 visible World; and yet they walk on fear-
 less and joyful, and have no Guard or De-
 fence from all this Misery, besides their own
 vain Profumption. Stupid Creatures, to lie
 down at Night, and awake in the Morning
 within an Inch of Hell, and yet secure and
 fearless! They live without God in the
 World, and that even in this Land of Light
 and Hope, where he offers to visit them
 with all his Graces; and yet they are hastening
 hourly to the eternal World, where they
 must

must meet and behold him in all his Terrible DISC
 rors. *Mean while, O ye obstinate* **XIX**

Will nothing awaken you, O ye obstinate Transgressors against God, ye obstinate Rejecters of his Grace and Gospel? Will nothing warn you to flee from the Wrath to come? But just thus it was in the Days of Noah, the Sinners of that Generation would not hearken to that Preacher of Righteousness; and even when they saw the Clouds of Heaven grow big and black over their Heads, and the Rain began to be pour'd down from the Skies, little did they imagine that it would have drown'd the Earth, till they were over-whelm'd with the rising Destruction. And so shall it be in the Days of the Son of Man, when all the Warnings of the Preachers have been despised, and the threatened Vengeance of the Book of God derided, when they have set up for bold and witty Scoffers, and impudently demanded, *Where is the Promise of his Coming?* Then shall the great and terrible Day of the Lord come, and pour out upon them this full Measure of Wrath and Indignation. *Is it now*

Is it not time, my Friends, to bethink yourselves, whether this be your Case? Is it not time for every one of us to examine our Souls? Am I exposed to this Danger? Am I every Moment on the Brink of this Misery, and yet content to continue so one Night

DISC. Night or one Day longer: Can I ever hope to escape the Fury of a God, while I thus abuse his Patience? Or can I have any Expectation of living with him as my God hereafter, if I never seek after him here? The Face of God, as a Stranger in the World to come, carries infinite Terrors in it, and yet we are content to be Strangers to him, and to live without his Acquaintance. *The Wrath of God abides upon every Man who is unregenerate in this Life, and who has not trusted in the Name of the Son of God, John iii. last; yet they are thoughtless of it, for they feel it not; but the Moment when they shall awake into the World of Spirits, that Wrath will be felt with sudden and dreadful Anguish, as a most unsupportable Burthen, and will crush all the Powers of the Soul into Torment.*

Reflect. V. It deserves, and it demands our highest Gratitude to the Great God, our humblest Acknowledgments and our most exalted Praises to his Majesty and his Mercy, that we, who have long ago deserved this Misery, are not yet plunged into the midst of it: That we have not been entirely cut off from the Land of Hope, and sent down to this Destruction. Blessed be the Name and the Grace of our God for ever and ever.

While there are Thousands who have been sent down to the Place of Punishment, whence

whenet there is no Redemption, before they had continued so long in Sin as many of us have done. what a peculiar Instance is it of Divine Long-suffering and Goodness, that we are not actually put under the Sting of this living Worm, under this fiery Vengeance from the Hand of God? What was there in us that should secure us from this Destruction, while we continuell in our State of Guilt, Rebellion and Impenitence? Have we not seen many Sinners on our right Hand, and on our left, but off in their Sins, and to all appearance they seem to be sent down to the Place of Sorrows? What is it but the special Mercy and distinguishing Favour of God that has dealt thus kindly with us, and spar'd and saved us, Week after Week, and Month after Month, while we continued in our Iniquities, and has given us Space for Repentance and Hope? What shall we render to the Lord for all his Patience and Long-suffering, even to this Day? How often have we incurred the Penalty of the Law of God, and the fiery Sentence of Condemnation by our repeated Iniquities, both against the Authority and the Grace of God? And yet we are alive in his Presence, and are hearing the Words of Hope and Salvation. O let us look back and shudder at the Thoughts of that dreadful Precipice, on the Edge of which we have so long wander'd.

DISC. Let us fly for Escape to the Refuge that is set before us, and give a thousand Glories to the Divine Mercy that we are not plunged into this Perdition.

Reflect VI. Let us learn from this Description of Hell, and our imminent Danger of it, the infinite Value and Worth of the Gospel of Christ. This Gospel, which calls us aloud to fly from the Wrath to come, and points out to us the only effectual Way to escape it. What can all the Riches of the Indies do to relieve us under the Guilt and Distress into which Sin had brought us? What can the Favour of Princes, and the flattering Honours of the World do to rescue us from this Danger? What can the highest Gust of Sensuality, and the most exquisite Delights of Flesh and Blood do to secure us against this over-whelming Misery? It is only the Gospel of the Blessed Jesus is our Refuge, and our Safety from the tremendous Destruction.

What are the Heights, and Depths, and Lengths of human Science, with all the boasted Acquisitions of the brightest Genius of Mankind? Learning and Science can measure the Globe, can sound the Depths of the Sea, can compass the Heavens, can mete out the Distances of the Sun and Moon, and mark out the Path of every twinkling Star for many Ages past, or Ages

to come, but they cannot acquaint us with the Way of Salvation from this long, this endless Distress. What are all the sublime Reasonings of Philosophers upon the abstruse and most difficult Subjects? What is the whole Circle of Sciences which human Wit and Thought can trace out and comprehend? Can they deliver us from the Guilt of one Sin? Can they free us from one of the Terrors of the Almighty? Can they alluage the Torment of a wounded Spirit, or guard us from the Impressions of Divine Indignation? Alas, they are all but Trifles, in comparison of this blessed Gospel, which saves us from eternal Anguish and Death.

'Tis the Gospel that teaches us the holy Skill to prevent this Worm of Conscience from gnawing the Soul, and instructs us how to kill it in the Seed and first Springs of it, to mortify the Corruptions of the Heart, to resist the Temptations of *Satan*, and where to wash away the Guilt of Sin. 'Tis this blessed Gospel that clearly discovers to us how we may guard against the Fire of Divine Wrath, or rather how to secure our Souls from becoming the Fuel of it. 'Tis this Book that teaches us to sprinkle the Blood of *Christ* on a guilty Conscience by Faith, *i. e.* by receiving him as sincere Penitents, and thereby defends us from the Angel of Death and Destruction.

DISC.
XII.

struction. This is that experimental Philosophy of the Saints in Heaven, whereby they have been released from the Bonds of their Sins, have been rescu'd from the Curse of the Law, and been secured from the gnawing Worm and the devouring Fire.

A serious Meditation of Hell in its exquisite Pain and Sorrow, will inhanse our Value of the Salvation of *Christ*, and will exalt our Esteem and Honour of the Love of God, who has deliver'd us from eternal Death. If we will, but appoint our Thoughts to dwell a little on the Terrors and Vengeance from which the blessed *Jesus* has rescu'd us by his glorious Undertaking, if we will stretch the Powers of our Souls, and survey the Lengths, and the Breadths, and the Depths of this Distress and Misery which we have deserved, this will discover to us the Heights, and the Depths, and the Lengths of his Love, who submitted himself to the Curses of the Law of God, *and was made a Curse for us*, that he might redeem us to the Possession of an eternal Blessing, *Gal. iii. 23.* This will shew us what exceeding Riches of the Grace of God have been laid out upon us for our Salvation. This will spread before us the unmeasurable Love of *Jesus*, which has brought him down from the Bosom of his Father into such Agonies as he sustain'd

tain'd in the Garden, and on the Cross, **DISC.**
 that he might rescue us from the Wrath **XII.**
 to come. O what immense and endless
 Debts of Gratitude and Love are due from
 every ransom'd Sinner, who has been re-
 leased from the Bonds of his Guilt, and
 from all this Wretchedness, by the Love of
 God the Father, and the Grace of his Son
Jesus Christ, to whom be Glory and Ho-
 nour, and most exalted Praise, for ever and
 ever. *Amen.*

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 the no more to be seen in the World XII

DISCOURSE XIII
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Where there is no more to be seen in the World XII

Argument to prove the Eternity of Hell

WHEN the Lord and Blessed God DISC
 had a mind to make known his XII
 Wisdom, his Power, and his Goodness
 amongst Creatures, he built this World
 Theatrical, in which those Partitions of his
 Nature might be display'd amidst the vari-
 ous Works of his Hands: He spread it
 round with the Beauty of Life and Plea-
 sure, he overhang'd it with a Canopy of Skies
 and Stars, and plac'd the glorious Bodies of
 the Sun and Moon there to appear in their
 alternate Seasons; and even amidst the Ruins
 which sin has brought into this World, yet
 this

DISCOURSE XIII.

The eternal Duration of the
Punishments in Hell.

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*Where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire
is not quenched.*

SECTION I.

Arguments to prove the Perpetuity of Hell.

WHEN the Great and Blessed God had a mind to make known his Wisdom, his Power, and his Goodness amongst Creatures, he built *this World* as a Theatre, in which those Perfections of his Nature might be display'd amidst the various Works of his Hands: He spread it round with the Blessings of Life and Pleasure, he over-hung it with a Canopy of Skies and Stars, and placed the glorious Bodies of the Sun and Moon there to appear in their alternate Seasons; and even amidst the Ruins which Sin has brought into this World, yet

DISC. still every Eye may behold the Traces of
 XIII. an Almighty, an All-wise, and a Bountiful
 { God.

When the same divine and sovereign Being design'd to exalt and diffuse the Wonders of his Grace among the best of his Creatures, he built a *Heaven* for them, and furnish'd it with unknown Varieties of Beauty and Blessing: And we would hope in our appointed Season to be rais'd to this upper World, and there to behold the Riches of divine Magnificence and Mercy, and to be Sharers thereof among the rest of the happy Inhabitants.

But since Sin and Wickedness has enter'd into his Creation of Men and Angels, he saw it necessary also to display the Terrors of his Justice, and to make his Wrath and Indignation known amongst rebellious Creatures, that he might maintain a just Awe and Reverence for his own Authority, and a constant Hatred of Sin thro' all his Dominions. For this Purpose he has built a *Hell*, a dreadful Building indeed, in some dismal Region of his vast Empire, where he has amass'd together all that is grievous and formidable to sensible Beings, and wicked Spirits carry their own inward Hell thither with them, a Hell of Sin and Misery; and tho' he has sent his own Son to acquaint us with the Distresses and Agonies of that doleful World, and to warn us of the
 Danger

Danger of falling into it; yet if any of us should be so unhappy as to continue in an obstinate State of Impenitence and Disobedience to God, we shall be made to confess, by dreadful Experience, that not one half hath been told us.

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Therefore hath God set before us these Terrors in his Word, that we might fly from this Wrath to come, and avoid these Sufferings: And therefore do his Ministers, by his Commission, proceed to publish this Vengeance and Indignation of the Lord, that Sinners might be awaken'd to lay hold on the Hope that is set before them, and might be affrighted from plunging themselves into this Pit of Anguish, whence there is no Redemption.

We have taken a short Survey of these Miseries, in the *Kind and Nature of them*, in some former Discourses; and we are now come to the last Thing contain'd in our Saviour's Description of *Hell*, and that is the *Perpetuity of it*: The Misery is everlasting in both the Parts of it, for *the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*. The Arguments which shall be employ'd to prove it are such as these.

I *Argument*. The express Words of *Christ* and his Apostles pronounce these Punishments *eternal*; and surely these Words are given to us to be the Foundation of our

DISC. Faith and Practice, and the Rules of our
 XIII. Hope and Fear. My Text seems to carry
 plain and unanswerable Evidence in it. *The
 Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.*
 And 'tis many times repeated in this Chap-
 ter, and that with a special Accent on the
 eternal Duration of it, to make that Cir-
 cumstance of it more observed, and to ag-
 gravate the Terror. Such an awful Repe-
 titon from the Lips of the Son of God
 should make the Sound of the Vengeance
 dwell longer on the Ear, and the Threaten-
 ing sink deeper into the Soul.

Let us next observe the final Sentence
 which *Christ*, as Judge, pronounces against
 impenitent Sinners among the Sons of Men,
 as well as against fallen Spirits, in *Matth. xxv.*
*'Tis this, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting
 Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*
 And as soon as the Sentence is pronounced,
 it is immediately executed, as our Saviour
 foretels, in the last Verse. *These shall go
 away into everlasting Punishment, and the
 Righteous into Life eternal.* What he pro-
 nounces as a Judge, he foretels also as a Pro-
 phet, that it shall be put in execution.

The express Word of God, in describing
 the Punishment of Sinners by the Pen of
 his two Apostles *Paul* and *John*, declares
 the same thing, *2 Thes. i. 9. They shall be
 punished with everlasting Destruction from
 the Presence of the Lord.* And the Book
 of

WARR. *in Hell.*

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of the Revelation gives us Assurance, that
these *Wicked* shall have no End. *Rev. xiv.*
10, 11. *The unchristian idolaters, who*
worship the Beast, shall drink of the Wine of
the Wrath of God, which is poured out with
our Adversaries, into the Cup of his Indigna-
tion, and shall be tormented with Fire and
Brimstone in the Presence of the Lamb, and
the Smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for
ever and ever. Jude the Apostle bears his
Testimony in the same manner, ver. 6, the
damned Spirits, who kept not their first Sta-
tion, are said to be cast down into Hell, and
bound in Chains of everlasting Darkness.
Now suppose a Man plunged into a Pit of
thick Darkness, by the Command of God,
and bound there with everlasting Chains,
what hope can he ever have of Deliverance?

And if Christ and his Apostles, who were
taught by him and by his blessed Spirit, as-
sert this Punishment shall be eternal, who
shall dare to contradict them? Who is there
so rash and confident as to say, "This Tor-
ment shall not be everlasting, this Worm
one Day shall die, and this Fire shall be
quenched?" Does it not approach to the
Crime of contradicting the Almighty, and
the true God?

II Argument. There is a sort of infinite
Evil in Sin, arising from the Consideration
of the Person against whom it is commit-
ted,

DISC. ted, i. e. the Great and Blessed God, for
 XIII. every Crime, according to the Law of Na-
 tions, and the common Sense of Mankind, takes its Aggravation from the Dignity of the Person offended, as well as from the Heinousness of the Act: so Reproaches or Assaults against a King, or a Father, are much more criminal and heinous than the same Assaults or Reproaches cast on an Equal or an Inferior; but all Sin being an Offence against God, an infinite Object, and a Violation of his Law, is a Dishonour of infinite Majesty, an Affront to the divine Authority, and therefore its Aggravations arise in that proportion to a sort of Infinity, and require an equal Punishment. But because the Nature of a Creature cannot suffer infinite Punishment in the *Intenseness of the Pain*, therefore he must bear it to an *infinite Duration*, i. e. to all everlasting.

When divine Justice pronounces a Sentence against the Sinner equal to the Demerit of Sin, it must be infinite, i. e. eternal; and the Sinner shall never be released from the Prison and the Punishment till he has paid the utmost Farthing, Matth. ix. 25. and till he has made Satisfaction to God equal to his Demands, and the Demerit of the Offence.

I know this Argument is treated with much Contempt and Derision among those of the Moderns, who would diminish the Evil

Evil of Sin, and shorten the Punishment of DISC.
 it: But it is much easier to ridicule it than XIII.
 to answer it: A Jest is no Refutation. And
 after my best Survey of it, I think, with-
 out Prejudice or Partiality, the Force of it
 seems to me unanswerable as to the Desert
 of Sin; and I am not ashamed to employ
 it in the Support of this Truth.

It is but a very feeble Opposition can be
 made to it by those who say, that *if Sin*
be counted an infinite Evil, and must have in-
finite Punishment, then all Sins are equal,
and will require equal Punishment; for there
 are no different Degrees in Infinity, or in
 things which are infinite.

But our Saviour has taught us, that there
 are certainly various Degrees of Punishment
 as well as of Sin: He assures us, that *it*
shall be more tolerable for the Inhabitants of
Sodom and Gomorrha, in the Day of Judg-
ment, than it shall be for Capernaum and
Bethsaida, where he had preached and
 wrought his Wonders, Luk. x. 12, &c. and
 the Reason is plain, (*viz.*) because the Sins
 of Sodom were less than theirs.

And 'tis very easy to answer this Pretence
 or *Objection* about the Equality of all Sins,
 for Sins may have different Degrees of Guilt
 and Aggravation as to the *Act*, where the
Object is the same, whether this Object be
 finite or infinite; as the Murder of a Father
 or a King is a much greater Crime than a
 Reproach

DISC. *Reproach or Slander* cast on the same Per-
XIII. sons. So the wilful Hatred of God and
 Blasphemy against him, with continued Ma-
 lice and publick violent Opposition to his
 Name, or Law, or Gospel, are far greater
 Sins than a single Neglect of his daily Wor-
 ship for fear of Persecution, or a distrusting
 his Providence, tho' both have the same in-
 finite Being, *i. e.* God, for their Object; and
 in this Sense there is a sort of Infinity in
 each of the Crimes.

And accordingly *Punishments* may be pro-
 portioned to every Crime, for they may
 differ greatly in the Degree of Severity and
 Torture, tho' they may be all equal or eter-
 nal in the Duration. *Sodom and Gamorrha,*
Capernaum and Bethsaida, may all suffer in-
 finite or everlasting Sorrow, and yet the De-
 grees of their Pain may be exceeding diffe-
 rent all the while. They may have the same
 Infinity of Duration, tho' very different as
 to the Intensity or Degree of the Pain.

III Argument. If the Iniquities commit-
 ted in this Life were not punished with Tor-
 ment which is everlasting, yet the Damned
 in Hell are ever sinning against God, and
 therefore they provoke the Vengeance of
 God to continue his punishing Hand upon
 them for ever. The Law of God in all its
 Demands of Duty, its Prohibitions of Sin,
 as well as in its Sanctions of Punishment,
 continues

continues for ever in Force in Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, and we see not how it can be abrogated where it arises from the very Nature of God and a Creature: And *curst* is he that continues not in all Things which the Law requires. Gal. iii. Every new Sin demands a new Curse and a new Punishment, and there is no reason which forbids a righteous Governor to cease punishing, while the rebellious Creature will not cease to offend, and especially while he maintains an everlasting Enmity and Rebellion against the Law of God his Creator.

If there were any humble Meltings of Repentance in the guilty Soul, if there were any sincere Mournings in the sinful Creature for having offended his Maker, if there were any Softness of Heart relenting under a Sense of the Evil of Sin, and returning to Obedience and Duty, even this would not oblige a righteous and wise Governor to forgive the Criminal; Repentance is no Compensation for a wilful Offence; nor is it thought unrighteous or unwise for a Prince to punish even a penitent Offender with Death.

But let us propose the Case in utmost Favour to a Sinner against the blessed God, let us imagine that Divine Wisdom and Divine Mercy perhaps might be supposed to contrive and to offer some Proposals to Justice in a way of Compassion, and might enquire whether

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DISC. whether the Sentence of Punishment could
XIII. not be reversed, or the Terror of it relieved,
 or some new State of Trial proposed. Let
 it be added in favour of the Criminal, that
 we do not find thro' all the Book of God,
 the actual Practice of true Repentance be-
 ginning among Men, but it has been always
 follow'd with proportionable Degrees of
 Compassion from God: But, on the other
 side, when there is nothing found in the
 Heart of a Sinner but Obstinacy, and Malice,
 and Revenge, Cursing and Blasphemy against
 the Almighty, without the least moving or
 melting into a genuine Penitence or holy
 Sorrow, without any meek Submission to
 the Majesty and Justice of God, or humble
 imploring his Mercy, what reasonable Hope
 can such Wretches have, that their Chains
 of Darkness should be broken, and the Pri-
 soners released from the Vengeance? When
 they shall curse his Justice, because it pu-
 nishes their Crimes, when they shall curse his
 Mercy, because it did not save their Souls, and
 curse and blaspheme the Blood of the Blef-
 sed *Jesus*, because it has not washed away
 their Sins, what possible Excuse can be
 made for such Creatures? Or what possible
 Expectation can there be for such Criminals,
 but an everlasting Continuance of the fiery
 Indignation?

Here it will be reply'd, but why should
 we suppose, and much more, why should
 we

Will the Damned ever repent? **DISG.**
 Will they not see the other World from **XIII.**
 this Flesh and Blood; wherein there are so
 many violently Passions and Appetites? Are
 they not far remote from all the Tempta-
 tions of Flesh and Sense, of Intemperance,
 Ambition, and Covetousness? Have they
 not Understanding to see Divine Truths
 more clearly than in this World? Have they
 not Reason to distinguish Good and Evil,
 and Free-will to chuse that which is Good?
 Will they not hate all Sin, since they have
 been so long taught the Mischief of Sin by
 their Sufferings? And is there any thing fit-
 ter than their Agonies and Torture by Fire,
 to make Men know and feel the dreadful
 Evil of sinning against God, and awaken
 them to Repentance?

To this I answer, Let us judge a little
 concerning the Sinners in Hell, by the Prac-
 tice of Sinners on Earth. How many
 wretched Creatures are there who have been
 long imprison'd, and perhaps punished for
 Crimes against the State, and yet persist in
 their rebellious Temper, and are never con-
 vinced they were in the Wrong, so far as to
 change their Treason into sincere Submission,
 Repentance, and Obedience? Was not *Pha-
 raoh*, King of *Egypt*, an Instance of the Stub-
 bornness and Impenitence of human Nature,
 when in Opposition to ten dreadful Plagues
 he would still pursue the flying *Israelites*,

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and deliver a People beloved of God. Is not Justice and Equity against the Government often opposed by the People? Would it be that Criminals in order? Have these Punishments any sufficient Power to bring their Hearts into true Repentance?

What tho' they do not live in the midst of sensual Temptations, yet who knows how far their Spirits, having been immersed in Flesh and Blood, may carry with them inward raging Appetites to those sinful Sensualities and defiling Pleasures, of which they are for ever deprived?

Let me ask again, Have the Devils ever repented in almost six thousand Years? Are they not the same Enemies to God, and his Glory, and his Image thro' all Ages? And tho' the damned Spirits of Men are absent from this World, and their evil Companions on Earth, yet are they not in the fittest Company to teach them Pride, and Rage, Resentment and Malice, and the most unfit to teach them Humility, Repentance, and Obedience to God? And when they have perversely sinned away all the Means of Grace in this Life, is it reasonable to imagine, that God will powerfully soften their Hearts by his Sovereign Grace, since he has never given the least Hint or Instance of it in all the Discoveries made in the Bible? And has it not been often one way of God's punishing Sinners here in this World, by letting

letting them go on in their Iniquity and **DISC.**
Madness to the End? And why may not **KHI.**
the Wisdom and Justice of God see it fit to
treat Sinners, who have been incorrigible in
this Life, by the same Method in the World
to come?

IV. Argument. The natural Effects and
Consequences of Sin living in the Soul, are
Misery and Torment so long as the Soul
lives, *i. e.* for ever. Sin, tho' it be a moral
Evil, as it is committed against God, yet it
is such an Enemy to the Nature of Man,
that where it has established its Habit and
Temper in the Soul, it naturally prepares
constant Anguish of Conscience and certain
Misery. A wicked Spirit all over averse to
God and Goodness, gone from this World
and all the soothing or busy Amusements of
it, intense in its Desires of Happiness, and
yet a Stranger to all that can make it truly
happy, and at the same time shut out by
God's righteous Judgment, from all the
Means and Hopes of Grace, must needs be
miserable, and has prepared a State of end-
less Misery for itself, because its Nature and
Duration are immortal. An unholy Crea-
ture who loves not God, and cannot delight
in Things holy and heavenly, but derives
its chief Joy from sinful Pleasures, can never
taste of Felicity, can never relish the Satis-
factions that come from the Knowledge,

DISC. and Love, and Enjoyment of God, and
 XIII. when it is torn away, and banished from all
 the sensible Amusements of this Life, it
 must and will be a wretched Creature in the
 World of Spirits, and that by the very
 Course of Nature: And God cannot be
 obliged to change the establish'd Course of
 Nature to relieve this Misery which the Sin-
 ner had wilfully brought on himself: nor
 can God make him happy without giving
 him a new Temper of Holiness, which he
 is not obliged to do by any Perfection of
 his Nature, or any Promise of Grace.

If the Souls of Men are immortal, such
 will their *Passions* be, their *Desires*, their
Fears, and their *Sorrows*. Now their *na-
 tural Desires of Happiness*, as I have said,
 will be intense and strong, when God, the
 Spring of all Happiness, who hath been re-
 nounced and abandon'd by them, hath now
 for ever forsaken them, and separated him-
 self from them. What can there remain
 for them but everlasting Darkness and De-
 spair, without a Dawn of Hope thro' all
 the Ages of Eternity? Their guilty Con-
 sciences, with the Views of God's unchange-
 able Holiness, will for ever fill them with
 new *Fears* and *Terrors*, what shall be the
 next Punishment they are to suffer. Such
 is the State of Devils at this Time, who ex-
 pect a more dreadful Punishment at the
 great Day, as several Places of Scripture
 make

make evident. Their being immersed in **DISC.**
the Guilt of Sin, and under the constant **XIII.**
and tyrannical Dominion of it, will over-
whelm them with present Grief, with cut-
ting Sorrows, and Horror unspeakable, which
will sink into the Centre of their Souls, and
make them an eternal Terror and Plague to
themselves.

Again, let us consider their Immortality
of Soul will be spent in *thinking*: And
what comfortable or hopeful Object is there
in Heaven, Earth, or Hell, on which they
can fix or employ their Thoughts for one
Moment, to give a short Release from their
extream Misery? So that they are left in
endless Successions of most painful Thoughts
and Passions from the very Nature of Things.

Again, suppose this Body of mine were
by Nature immortal, and was design'd by
my Creator in its Constitution to live for
ever; and suppose by my own Folly and
Madness, my own wilful Indulgence of
Appetite and Passion, I had brought some
dreadful Distemper into my Flesh which
was found to be incurable, whether it be
the Gout or the Stone, or some more ter-
rible Malady of the nervous Kind, must not
this Gout, by Necessity of Nature, become
an immortal Gout? Must not these Distem-
pers be immortal Distempers, and create
eternal Pain? And is the God of Nature
bound to work a Miracle to cure and heal
these

DISC. these Diseases which I have wilfully brought
XIII. upon myself by my own Iniquities, and that
 after many Warnings? Is it unrighteous in
 God to let me languish on amidst my Ag-
 nies and Groans as long as my Nature con-
 tinues in being, *i. e.* to Immortality? And
 especially when there are valuable Ends in
 Divine Providence, and God's Government
 of the World to be subserved, by suffering
 such wilful, rebellious, and impenitent Crea-
 tures to become Sacrifices to their own Ini-
 quity and his Justice, and perpetual Monu-
 ments to other Worlds of their own Mad-
 ness and his Holiness. Such is the Case of
 a sinful Spirit, and therefore a God of Justice
 may pronounce upon it, and execute the
 eternal Misery.

SECTION II.

*The strongest and most plausible Objections a-
 gainst the Perpetuity of Hell answer'd.*

I think these Reasons, which have been
 given, are sufficient to justify the Ministers
 of the Gospel in representing the Punish-
 ments of Hell as everlasting: But Man, sin-
 ful Man does not love to hear of this dread-
 ful Perpetuity of Hell: They would fain
 find some Period to these Sorrows, they
 search on every side if there be no way for
 escape from this Prison, no Door of Mercy,

no

no Cranny of Hope left among the Reasons of Things, or among the Attributes, or the Transactions of the blessed God: And they are ever proposing some Methods to cut short this Eternity, which Scripture ascribes to the Punishment of impenitent Sinners. I shall endeavour therefore here to give a fair and plain Answer to the strongest Objections against this Doctrine which I ever yet have met with.

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The first Objection is raised from a Criticism on the Words of Scripture. The Greek and Hebrew Words, say they, which we translate *Eternal* and *Everlasting*, where the Torments of Hell are mention'd, are not always used for proper and complete Eternity, they sometimes signify only a long Duration: So God gave *Abraham* and his Seed the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting Possession, Gen. xvii. 8. but now the *Turks* possess it. Several of the Statutes of the *Levitical* Law were said to be everlasting, Lev. xvi. 34. But they are all abolished in the Gospel. The Sons of *Aaron* had an everlasting Priesthood conferr'd upon them, Exod. xl. 15. But this Office is cancell'd by the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, and finished for ever.

Besides, let it be remember'd, say the Objectors, that the Hebrew Word *עולם* *Olam*, and the Greek *Αἰών* and *Αἰώνες* signify only the various Ages or Periods of Time which be-

DISC. long to the Duration of Creatures, or to some
XIII. Constitutions of God concerning his Crea-
 tures: And they should be translated an *Age*,
 or *Ages*, more properly than any thing else:
 And the Adjective *Αἰώνιος*, when apply'd to
 Creatures, can relate only to *these Ages*; but
 these Expressions were never design'd to en-
 ter into God's own Eternity, either before
 the Existence of this World, or after the
 Consummation of it: Upon which Reason
 it is highly improper and absurd to assert,
 that the Duration or Punishment of Creatures
 in Hell shall be properly eternal and equal to
 the Duration of the blessed God himself.
 Now since every Thing in God's Transactions
 towards Creatures is sometimes limited by
 these *Αἰώνες* or *Ages*, which are Periods of
 Time that shall be finished, why may not
 the Damnation and the Sorrows of Hell be
 also finished and cancell'd at a certain Length
 of Years, tho' the common Words, which
 we translate *Eternal* and *Everlasting*, be
 ascribed to them in Scripture?

Ans. I. These are the same Words both
 in *Greek* and *Hebrew*, by which God ex-
 presses *his own Eternity*, which is absolute
 and complete without End. He is *the ever-*
lasting God, Gen. xxi. 33. *The eternal God*,
 and *his everlasting Arms*, Deut. xxxiii. 27.
 Rom. i. 20. and xvi. 26. and several other
 Places. These are the Words also by which
 the Scripture expresses the Duration of the
Felicities

Felicities of Heaven, and the eternal Life and DISC.
Happiness of the Saints, Dan. xii. 2. Rom. XIII.
vi. last, Job. iii. 15, &c. Now, why should
 we not suppose the same Words to signify
 the same Duration, when the Old or New
 Testament speaks of *everlasting Burnings* as
 the Vengeance of God against the Wicked,
Esai. xxxiii. 14. or *everlasting Shame and*
Contempt? Dan. xii. 2. And especially where
 the Joys of the Saints, and the Misery of
 sinners, are set in Opposition to one another
 in the same Text, as in *Dan. xii.* and *Matth.*
xxvi. 45. *The Wicked shall go away into ever-*
lasting Punishment, and the Righteous into
Life eternal? And yet further, when we
 find this Doctrine sufficiently confirmed by
 many other Places of Scripture which set
 forth the Eternity of these Torments? I
 grant, that the Eternity of God himself, be-
 fore this World began, or after its Consum-
 mation, has something in it so immense and
 so incomprehensible, that in my most ma-
 ture Thoughts I do not chuse to enter into
 those infinite Abysses; nor do I think we
 ought usually, when we speak concerning
 Creatures, to affirm positively, that their
 Existence shall be equal to that of the blef-
 sed God, especially with Regard to the Du-
 ration of their Punishment: Perhaps this
 sort of Language may carry in it something
 beyond what we are called to discourse about,

DISC. at least in this mortal State, and therefore
XIII such Comparisons are more safely omitted.

But I would remark here still, that these
^{AGES} or Ages both of Reward and Punish-
 ment, which are pronounced concerning
 Saints or Sinners, do but begin in their Per-
 fection at the End of this World; and thence
 it follows, that they must enter far into the
 Eternity of God's Existence yet to come:
 And the Saints will be made happy, and the
 Sinners will be punished for long Ages after
 the End of this World, and all the ^{AGES} or
 Ages of it.

And though God, by his Spirit, has not
 been pleased to make this Comparison ex-
 pressly, nor assert our Duration commensu-
 rate with his own, yet he is pleased to ex-
 press the Duration of the Punishment of
 Sinners in the same common Language and
 Phrases, whereby he expresses his own Du-
 ration, and the Happiness of the Saints;
 and hereby he encourages us to express these
 Punishments by the same common Words in
 our Language too, rather than venture to cut
 them short by a *Greek or Hebrew* Criticism,
 without any divine Warrant or Necessity*.

Now
 • The Word *aion*, *perpetual*, is also apply'd to the Chains
 of Devils, *Jad. vi.* as well as to God, *Rom. i.* and however
 the Word *aion* and *aion* may be used for Ages or Periods in
 this World, yet *aion* *run aion*, or *Ages of Ages*, is never
 apply'd in all the New Testament to any thing but God or
Christ, or the *Blissfulness of Saints*, or the *Punishment of Sin-
 ners*; and therefore we may well conclude, that all these four
 run into an Eternity beyond all the supposed Periods of this
 World, and far beyond all our Conceptions.

Now are there any Sinners so void of **DISC.**
 Understanding, of so daring and desperate a **XIII.**
 Mind, as to venture their *eternal* *All* upon
 such a poor Criticism of Words? Even upon
 Supposition these Terms in the *Greek* and
Hebrew might signify any long Duration
 short of Eternity; yet there is a terrible
 Hazard in confining them to this Sense,
 since they do denote a proper Eternity, when
 they describe the Duration of the blessed
 God; and I think we may add also, the
 Duration of the Happiness of the Saints.

Besides, let it be remembred, that the other
 Expressions of Scripture, which denote and
 pronounce the Perpetuity or Eternity of these
 Punishments, are not liable to the same Criti-
 cism or Ambiguity of a Word. *Their Fire*
shall be unquenchable or is not quenched, their
Worm dieth not. They have no rest Day nor
Night, they shall be tormented Day and Night
for ever and ever, Rev. xiv. and 20. These
 Expressions seem to carry with them a more
 certain Signification of the perpetual Conti-
 nuance of the Punishment. Now can the
 Tempter and the Deceiver of Souls have so
 unhappy an Influence over you, as to per-
 suade you to venture onward in the Paths of
 Sin, to put off Religion and delay your Re-
 pentance, and neglect the Means of Salva-
 tion, in hopes that hereafter this weak Cri-
 ticism, upon some of the Threatnings, may
 take place before the Judge of the whole
 Earth, and thus excuse or save you? Is not
 such

DISC. such a sorry Refuge and Presumption a dangerous and a dismal Sign upon impenitent **XIII.** Sinners, that Sin and Satan have darken'd your Understanding, and confounded your Judgment, as well as harden'd your Hearts, in order to your everlasting Destruction?

Ans. 2. Suppose the Punishments of Hell continue only for a long time, and not for an endless Immortality, yet this Time would certainly be found exceeding long for Sinners to bear the Torment even according to their own Criticisms. Let us consider this Matter under some Particulars. The *Jewish* Dispensation, which is sometimes called *everlasting*, stood near about fifteen hundred Years, from *Moses* to *Christ*; and are ye content to languish and groan under Torments and Miseries, for fifteen hundred Years, merely to satisfy your vicious Appetite of Pleasure for a few Days or a few Years of this mortal Life?

Again, The *rebellious Sinners*, who were destroyed at the Flood, and their Spirits, which were sent into the Prison of *Hades* or Hell, were certainly confin'd there four and twenty hundred Years: And if they were released then, as some imagine, by the Preaching of *Christ* to them, 'tis a long and dreadful Time to continue under the Vengeance of God; and is it worth while for any Man to continue in Sin on Earth, and to venture this Length of Punishment in Hell?

What I build this Computation upon, are **DISC.**
some Expressions of *St. Peter*, 1 *Ep.* iii. 19, **XIII.**
20. where *Christ* is said to preach unto the
Spirits in Prison, which some time were dis-
obedient, when once the Long-suffering of
God waited in the Days of *Noah*; some have
supposed, that this Text informs us of
Christ's Descent into Hell after his Death,
and then preaching to those Rebels who
were drown'd in the Flood, near two thou-
sand four hundred Years before, in order to
awaken them to Repentance and Salvation:
Whereas others think this Text may be bet-
ter expounded concerning the Spirit of *Christ*
given to *Noah*, which made him a Preacher
of Righteousness, when he foretold and
threaten'd a Flood of Waters, and called
Men to Repentance.

But if it should be granted, that those
rebellious Spirits among the Dead did all
repent, and were deliver'd by this Preach-
ing of *Christ*, would you chuse to indulge
the Delights of Sin for a short Season, and
venture twenty-four hundred Years of Tor-
ment and Anguish for it?

Yet further, the *Devils* have lain under
Punishment near six thousand Years, (*viz.*)
four thousand before *Christ* came, and almost
two thousand Years since, which may be
thus computed from what *St. Jude* says of
them. The *Angels* who kept not their first
Station, they were cast into Chains of Dark-
ness

DIAC. *ness* probably before the Creation of this our
XIII. World, for they were fallen, and tempted
 Adam to sin as soon as this World was
 made: And they had been confined in these
 Chains from that Time about four thou-
 sand Years before *Christ* came, and are wait-
 ing still for yet sharper Punishment at the
 Judgment of the great Day. *Jude vi.* and
 'tis evident that they are conscious of this
 Terror and this future Increase of Punish-
 ment, for they expostulated with our Sa-
 viour, *Matth. viii. 29.* *Art thou come to tor-
 ment us before the Time?* Now 'tis near two
 thousand Years since *Christ* came, and from
 the Time of their Sinning, unto this Day
 it is almost six thousand Years: And when
 the great Day of Judgment comes, their
 fiercer Punishment is but then to begin:
 And are not the Devil and his Angels sen-
 tenced and confined to dwell together with
 the wicked Children of *Adam*, when they
 shall be consigned at that dreadful Day to
 the same everlasting Fire and Torment,
 which was prepared for those evil Spirits?
 And who knows when their Torment will
 end? Now what Folly and Hardness of
 Heart, or rather what Madness is it for Men
 to continue in their Sins, to delay their Re-
 turn to God, and abandon the Grace of the
 Gospel under this foolish Flattery and wild
 Presumption, that above six thousand Years
 hence perhaps a certain Day may come
 when

when the *Worm* of Conscience will die; and the *Fire* of Hell will be quenched? Such **DISC XIII**
Presumption is Madness and Distraction rather than Reasoning.

The *second Objection* is derived from the *Justice and Equity of God*: Surely may some Person say, The Justice of God will proportion the Punishment to the Offence; but since our Sins are but the Actions of mortal and short-lived Creatures, and are committed in a few Years of Time, why should the Punishment be immortal, and the Anguish be lengthen'd out to Eternity? Can a righteous God pronounce such a severe and unjust Sentence, and execute it in its full Dimensions?

Ans. It is not the Length of Time which wicked Men spent in committing their Sins, nor the Nature of the Persons who have sinned, that determines the Measure of Punishment, but the Dignity of that infinitely glorious Being, against whom Sin is committed, that gives such a high Aggravation as to require Punishment without end. How many Instances are there amongst Men wherein Offenders against their Neighbours, or against a Magistrate, who spent but a few Moments in the Crime, yet are doomed to Imprisonment for Months and Years? And a lower Degree of Trespass against a King, which is short of High-Treason, is sometimes punished with Confiscation

DISC. fication of Goods, and with Poverty and
XIII. close Imprisonment for Life: And by the
 same Reason, the Sins of Men being committed against a God of infinite Majesty, require an endless Punishment, as I have proved in the second Argument: And therefore divine Justice pronounces or inflicts no longer Penalty than the Crimes of Men deserve, according to their Aggravations. If any Sinners tarry then till they have paid the utmost Farthing to divine Justice, I grant God will release them, but he has given us no hope before.

The *third Objection* is drawn from the *Sovereignty and Goodness of God*. It is granted, say they, that the Threatnings of eternal Death are denounced against Sinners in Scripture, yet it is not necessary God should execute them to the full. When a *Law* is made, the *Threatnings* of it only declare what Punishment the Offender shall be exposed to, and shall be obliged to bear when it is inflicted; but these Expressions in a Law do not oblige the Government to inflict that Sentence with all its Terrors. It is granted, that in the Case of *Promises*, Truth and Veracity oblige the Promiser to fulfil them punctually, because the Right of the Thing promised passes over to that other Person to whom the Promise was made, and he hath such a Right to require it, that it is Injustice to withhold it from him; and therefore

fore everlasting Felicity must be given to the **DISC.**
Righteous: But in *Threatnings* the Case is **XIII.**
otherwise; for tho' the full Punishment is
due to Sinners, yet they will never require
the Execution of it; and the Goodness of
God will incline him to relieve the Sufferer,
and to release him from the Severity of such
a Punishment, where his Veracity or Truth
does not forbid it.

To this I *answer* two ways:

1st, I will not debate this Point of Law
now, how far a Governor of sovereign and
absolute Authority can dispense with his own
Threatnings, can omit the Execution of
them, relax the Degree of threatned Punish-
ment, or shorten the Duration of it: But
let it be consider'd, that here is not only the
Threatning of a God, the universal Gover-
nor, but the *Prediction* of this eternal Pu-
nishment, by a *God who cannot lye*. God's
own Truth and Veracity are concerned in
this Case, since his Son *Jesus*, who is the
greatest of his Messengers, together with
the Prophets and Apostles, have in the Name
of God often foretold, that these Punish-
ments shall be eternal: And therefore what-
soever an absolute Governor might do, as to
shortening the Punishment *threatned*, in a
way of Mercy and Relaxation; yet I can-
not see how the Truth and Veracity of God
himself, or the Veracity of his Son *Jesus*
Christ, who is the great Prophet, or the
Truth

DEFC. Truth of the words of his Prophets and Miracles
XIX ~~scilicet~~ ^{scilicet} can be maintained, if the ~~Parables~~
~~are~~ not executed according to the many
 express *Predictions* of it. These all agree
 to tell us, by Inspiration from Heaven, in
 various Forms of Speech, that the Torments
 of Hell shall be everlasting; and (as I hint-
 ed before) the Man *Jesus*, who pronounces
 this eternal Sentence as a *Lord* and a *Judge*,
 foretels it also as a *Prophet*, that the Execu-
 tion of it shall be to all everlasting.

Ans. 2. Obstinate and impenitent Sinners
 have no Reason to expect, that the Good-
 ness of God should release them from their
 Miseries, since the Justice and the Holiness,
 the righteous Government and Authority of
 God in his Law require and demand their
 Due of Honour, as well as his Goodness.
 Do we not see these Honours of divine Jus-
 tice, and of God's Hatred of Sin, have been
 continually demanded and executed in the
 infinite and innumerable Evils, Sorrows, Mi-
 series, Diseases and Deaths, that have been
 spread over this World almost six thousand
 Years because of Sin? Nor does his Good-
 ness forbid or hinder it.

And let it be remember'd too, that all
 this immense Variety and long Succession of
 Plagues and Terrors arose originally from the
 just Indignation and Resentment of God against
 one Sin, even that of the first Man. Who
 was it that burnt *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with
 Fire

First from Heaven? Who was it that chain'd DISC
fallen Angels in Darkness to a more terrible XIII
Judgment? Was it not a God of supreme
Goodness? Who sent Famines, and Pesti-
lences, and Slaughters all over the Earth in
many distinct Generations, whereby Man-
kind have been made abundantly wretched
and plunged into Millions of Distresses?
And yet the Goodness of God abides for-
ever. And while the Great God is acting
according to the Glories of his Nature and
Government in punishing rebellious Crea-
tures, his Goodness will feel no soft and
sensible Impressions from all their Groans
and Outcries; but if I may so express it,
will be changed into just Indignation with-
out end. And the Language of it to those
impenitent Wretches will be this, *Because*
I have called and ye refused, ye have set at
naught all my Counsel and would none of my
Reproof, I will laugh at your Calamity, I
will mock when your Fear cometh; when your
Fear cometh as Desolation, and your Destruc-
tion as a Whirlwind, when Distress and An-
guish cometh upon you, then shall ye call upon
me but I will not answer; ye shall seek me
early, but ye shall not find me; for ye hated
Knowledge, and did not chuse the Fear of the
Lord: Ye would none of my Counsels, ye de-
spised all my Rebukes; therefore shall ye eat
of the Fruit of your own Way, and be filled
with your own Devices. Take them, Angels,
bind them Hand and Foot, and cast them into

DISC. *everlasting Fire and utter Darkness; there
XIII. shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing
of Teeth, Prov. i. Matth. xlii. 13.*

Let us cease then to murmur against the Threatnings and the Transactions of the Great God, till we are become fitter Judges of his Perfections and their Demands. Let us cavil no more against his Conduct and Government, till we can teach him how far his punishing Justice shall go in the Execution of his Threatnings, and till we can assign to him the Point and Limit where his Goodness shall interpose and restrain that Justice.

The *fourth Objection* is derived from the *Rectitude of the Nature of God, or his common Equity and Mercy united*, which has been represented in this Manner. Suppose one of the damned Spirits among Mankind should address himself to the Great God in such sort of Language as this, "Lord, I was created by thy sovereign Pleasure without my own Will, I did not desire to be made, much less to be born in such a Relation to *Adam*, whereby I brought a sinful Nature into the World with me: But I was united by thy Power and Pleasure to a Body which had the Seeds of Sin and Misery in it: There were strong Appetites and violent Passions mingled with my Flesh and Blood, which I myself had no Hand in procuring; they fermented in me with much Vehemence, and I was tempted to many Excesses: I made some
" Re-

"Resistance at first, and many times try'd
"to subdue them, but I was overcome:

DISC.

XIII.

"At last I suffer'd myself to be carried
"away by the Stream of these sinful Affec-
"tions and Appetites, which I could not
"possibly avoid, nor easily subdue. Is it
"agreeable to thine Equity, O Blessed God,
"to punish such a poor Wretch with ever-
"lasting Torments? And can thy Mercy
"continue to see this my Misery for ever
"and ever, and not help me? I entreat
"thee, O thou Almighty Author of my
"Being, to destroy and annihilate me ut-
"terly Soul and Body; take away this Be-
"ing which I never asked nor desired;
"nay, which I would not have consented
"to accept among the sinful Race of Man-
"kind, because in this Track of Generation
"and Existence I stood much more likely
"to be miserable than to be happy."

Ans. 1st, As for the Reasonableness and
Equity of the Conveyance and Communi-
cation of the original Effects of the Sin of
Adam thro' every Generation of Man, 'tis
granted there are some Difficulties attending
it; but these are generally answer'd by the
Writers on that Subject; and for me to di-
vert from my present Discourse, in order to
debate this Point here, would be too tedious.
The Equity of this wise and awful Consti-
tution of God has been lately vindicated in
a large Treatise on the *Ruin and Recovery of*
Mankind, especially in the second Edition

DISC. of that Book. But 'tis enough for my present Argument to say, that God himself will make the Equity of this Constitution to appear with much more Evidence and Conviction in the last great Day, when Millions of actual Criminals shall stand before the Judgment-Seat, who owe the first Spring of their Sin and Ruin to our common Parent, and yet will fall under the righteous Condemnation of the Judge.

Ans. 2. When God decreed to give thee a Being, O Sinner, and design'd thee in his eternal Ideas to be a Man, placed among a thousand Blessings of Nature and Providence, it was then a Favour of thy Creator; for thou wert design'd also in this original divine Idea to have full Sufficiency of Power to become wise and happy. It was also a Favour from thy Creator, that he took all these thy Sufficiencies of Power, and put them into the Hand of one Man, even the Father of thy Race, because he was as wise, and holy, and as well able as any Man of his Posterity could be, to preserve his Station in the Favour of God, and to secure thy Happiness together with his own; and he had much stronger Obligations to obey his Maker, and more powerful Motives to secure thy Happiness than thou thyself, or any single Man could possibly have, because he was intrusted with the Felicity of so many Millions of his own dear Offspring as well as his own. Now though

though *Adam*, thy first Father, being thus **DISC.**
furnished with Sufficiencies of Power, and **XIII.**
with the strongest Obligations to preserve
himself and thee, has actually sinned and
ruin'd himself and his Offspring; (this is
indeed an unhappy Truth;) but the Great
God is not to blame, who has not only
acted wisely but kindly towards his Creatures
in this Constitution, because, so far as we
can judge, it was much more probable that
Adam would have maintain'd his Inno-
cence and his Happiness, together with
that of his Offspring.

Again, when the Race of Man was ruin'd,
and God saw that every Man would come
into the World under unhappy Circumstan-
ces of Guilt and Corruption of Nature, he
provided a Covenant of Grace, and brought
thee into some Knowledge of it: And this
had been effectual to have recover'd and
saved thee from the Ruins of the Fall if thou
hadst exerted all thy Force, employ'd all
thy natural Powers of Understanding and
Will for this Purpose, and used all thy Di-
ligence to follow the Methods of his Grace,
and hadst sought earnestly for divine Aids:
For there is no Man among the Damned is
able to say, *I have done every thing that was*
in my Power to do: No Man shall be con-
demned for what was utterly impossible for
him to avoid: It is confess'd indeed thou
art laid under some Hardships and Difficul-
ties by the Sin of thy first Father; yet it is

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DISC. XIII. **W**hine own actual and personal Crimes for which thou art here condemn'd at this Judgment, wherein every one shall be judged and rewarded according to his Works: 'Tis for many wilful Offences against the Law of God, and for sinning against the Offers of divine Grace; 'tis for Obstinaey against thy own Conscience, and all the outward and inward Monitions of thy Duty, that thou art fallen under this Sentence, and because thou didst not labour and strive against Sin, and resist it even to the End of thy State of Life and Trial. Thou hast had many an inward Reproof for Sin, many a secret or publick Call to Virtue, and perhaps loud and fair Warnings of thy Danger; but thou hast turn'd a deaf Ear to them all, and it is thy own Folly, Obstinaey, and Iniquity, that have brought thee into this Misery, and thou must eat the Fruit of thy own Works.

If there should be any Person found indeed among *Jews, Gentiles or Christians*, who can justly complain, *I have not had a fair and full State of Trial, and yet I am condemned*, I think we may grant that the righteous God will release such from their Misery, after they have worn out a proper Number of Years in Punishment proportionable to their past Crimes; and that there shall be a fair, and full, and proper State of Trial appointed to them before they shall be utterly and unretrievably miserable: But if no such Person be found there, if there
be

be no such just Complaint to be made among the Millions of the Damned, then they may be still continued in their Prison and Punishment without any Imputation upon divine Justice and Equity. DISC. XIII.

Ans. 3. Whensoever any such Criminal in Hell shall be found making such a sincere and mournful Address to the righteous and merciful Judge of all, if at the same time he is truly humble and penitent for his past Sins, and is grieved at his Heart for having offended his Maker, and melts into sincere Repentance, I cannot think that a God of perfect Equity and rich Mercy will continue such a Creature under his Vengeance; but rather, that the Perfections of God will contrive a way for escape, though God has not given us here any Revelation or Discovery of such special Grace as this.

But, on the other hand, whatever melting and moving Speeches may be made by Sinners here on Earth, in Compassion to the Sinners who are gone before them to Hell; yet if no such Person be ever found in Hell, truly and humbly repenting of his Sins, nor have we any reason to think there ever will, why should a righteous God be obliged to cease punishing a Rebel who only is vexed and raging under his own Chains, and who continues in the Spirit of Obstinacy and Rebellion against God, and will not repent of it?

DISC.

XIII

Objection the fifth is derived from the Mercy and Compassion of God, compar'd with the Mercy and Compassion of Man. Surely the Compassion of the ever-blessed God, who has described himself rich in Mercy, abundant in Goodness, and whose very Name is Love, 1 John iv. 8. must have transcendent Tenderness and Pity towards his Creatures, the Work of his Hands, above all the Compassions that any one Fellow-Creature can express towards another. Now the very Thought and Name of eternal Punishments, or endless Torment, is such as seems to shock the Nature of a good-natur'd Man; and tho' he was never so much injured, yet he would never have a Thought of wishing his Enemy any kind of eternal Punishment for it, much less of condemning him to everlasting Misery, and supporting him in Being on purpose to suffer it; and therefore we cannot suppose that God will do it.

This Objection is further strengthen'd by an Expression of our Saviour himself, who says Mark xviii. 19. There is none good, save one, that is God: As much as to say, There is none equal or comparable in Goodness to God himself: And 'tis further supported still by the common Notions which good Men have of God; those Expressions in the apocryphal Writings confirm it, 4 Esd. v. 33. Then said the Lord unto me, Thou art sore troubled in Mind for Israel: Lovest thou that

that People more than he that made them? DISE

And in the same Book, Chap. viii. 27. Thou

confest for sport, that thou shouldst be able to

love my Creature more than I.

Now, since

no good Man could wish such a Curse or

Mischief to his worst and most wicked En-

emy, as Torment without End, surely we

cannot conceive the Great God will ever be

so severe as to inflict it.

Answer 1st, 'Tis readily allowed, that

God has more Goodness than any Creature,

but God has also more Wisdom and Know-

ledge, which concur with his Goodness in

all his Actions, and he forms a much juster

Judgment concerning the Evil and Demerits

of Sin and Rebellion against himself, than

it is possible for any Creature to form: And

I think I may boldly assert, none can know

the complete Evil of Sin, or its full Desert,

but that same glorious Being against whom

Sin is committed, who knows well the Dig-

nity of his own Nature and his own Law,

and what unspeakable Injury is done thereto

by the Sins of Men. Now his Goodness

in all his Transactions must be regulated and

limited by this infinite Wisdom; and if a

Man does not see and consent to the just

Demerits of Sin against his Maker, 'tis be-

cause he has less Wisdom and Knowledge

than the Great God has, and his Tenderness

and Compassion may run into very great

Excesses, and may be in some Instances a

Sign

DISC. Sign of his Weakness and Folly, as well as
III. of his Goodness and Pity, as I shall shew
 under the next Answer.

At present let us represent the Case in a common Instance. When Criminals go to Execution from Month to Month, or from Year to Year, in this great City; and especially if some of them have a handsome and agreeable Appearance, and if they are wringing their Hands with Outcries, and vexing their own Hearts, and are stung by their own Consciences for their having brought this Misery upon themselves, you will find several of the Spectators of so tender a Make as to grieve for the Execution of such Criminals, and to wish in their Hearts, it was in their Power to save them. And yet further, if there are Numbers of these wicked Creatures that are sent at once to the Punishment of the Sword or the Gallows, there may be many of these Spectators grieving for them, and pitying them, and perhaps exclaiming against the Severity of the Law, and the Cruelty of the Judge, for condemning such Malefactors to death.

But do all these Weepers and Complainers judge justly of the Case? Do they consider how pernicious and ruinous a thing it would be to a Government to let such Traitors go unpunished? Do they know, that 'tis a piece of Clemency and Goodness to the Innocent to punish the Wicked? Or

that it is a piece of necessary Honour due to **DISC.**
the Laws, to make those who insolently break **XIII.**
them sustain the Penalty that the Law has appointed. Do they remember that the few
good Qualities, or supposed Talents, or fine
Appearances which these Offenders are pos-
sessed of, should out-weigh the Demands of
the Law and Justice, the Peace of the Nation
or Kingdom, and the Restraint of others from
the same Crimes?

Answ. 2. The Goodness of God, the eter-
nal Spirit, is a much superior thing to the
Tenderness and Compassion of Man dwelling
in Flesh and Blood. Man grows compas-
sionate by a sort of Sympathy or Sensation
of the Miseries which his Fellow-Creatures
endure, and though this is exceeding use-
ful for many Purposes of human Life, and
therefore God planted it in our Natures, yet
it has so much Mixture of animal Nature
with it, that it frequently degenerates into
Weakness, Fondness, and Folly. And in-
deed, if every tender Creature must be gra-
tify'd in this Weakness, and form the Rules
of Government, there would never a Male-
factor fall under Execution, but the vilest
Criminals would be spared, tho' the Govern-
ment were ruin'd.

On the other hand, the Goodness or Mercy
of God is a sedate Willingness or Design to
do good to Creatures, and particularly to
the Miserable, but always according to the
Directions

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DISC. Directions of Wisdom and Holiness. As

XIII God cannot have such Anger, Relentment,

or Cruelty in his Nature, as Mankind may

fall into when they are punishing Offenders;

so properly speaking, he has no such sort of

passionate Tenderness and Sympathy in spar-

ing them: Though the Words of greatest

Affection are sometimes used by the sacred

Writers to figure out the Mercies of God to

Man; yet God both punishes and spares ac-

cording to the calm and righteous Exercises

of his Wisdom, and not under the Influence

of such Passions as we feel.

Since therefore the Exercise of such sort

of Passions amongst Men oftentimes appears

to be the Weakness of Nature, joined with

their Ignorance of the Rules of Equity, is

it reasonable that the Great and All-wise God

should make such Creatures his Patterns in

the Limitation of the Exercises of his Jus-

tice? Or that he should be as weak as they

are, and as much moved to swerve from the

Rules of his own righteous Government by

such a sort of Tenderness as ignorant, weak

and foolish Man may sometimes express to-

wards Criminals in their deserved Misery?

It is readily granted, that a wise and a good

Man may and ought to be sorry and grieved,

that any of his Fellow-Creatures should be

so vicious as to bring themselves under so

severe a Penalty by their own wilful Crimes;

but still in their calmest and wisest Thoughts

they

they acknowledge the Wisdom and Equity of the Government, in inflicting such Penalties upon those who heinously offend, and they acquiesce in the Sentence and the Execution.

Our blessed Lord Jesus himself, who was the wisest and the best of Creatures, look'd upon the City of Jerusalem with an Eye of Compassion, and wept over it, Luk. xiii. 34. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gather'd thy Children as a Hen doth gather her Brood under her Wings, and ye would not? therefore behold your House is left unto you desolate.* Let it be observed here, that our Saviour had the Bowels, and Compassions, and Tenderness of the best of Men; but he still maintains the vindictive Exercise of the Government of God. "Your Desolation must," and shall come upon you, nor will I forbear to bid or withhold it." And I am sure the human Nature of our blessed Saviour was formed nearest to the Image of God beyond any Creature besides; and as I have hinted before, it is he who is the supreme Messenger of his Father's Love, that has pronounced these eternal Punishments upon impenitent Sinners in many Parts of his Ministry.

Ans. 3. How far will these *Objectors* permit the Justice of God to go in the Punishment

DISC. punishment of impenitent Sinners? If eternal
XIII. Punishment must neither be threatened nor
 inflicted, lest divine Goodness be injured, then
 all Mankind, even the worst and vilest of
 Criminals, must certainly be one Day de-
 livered from their Miseries; and thus the
 Great God, who is infinitely offended, is
 bound to finish his Wrath one Day, and
 return in Mercy to the Offenders, whether
 they return to him by Repentance or no.
 What! May the criminal rebel Creature
 with Impudence and Spite affront the Creator
 infinitely, and must not the Creator have a
 Right to demand equal Vengeance? No,
 he must not, according to these Writers:
 For if the essential Goodness of God do cer-
 tainly forbid eternal Punishments, these Ab-
 surdities, as gross as they appear, will be the
 necessary Consequents of it: And tho' the
 Creature be not restrain'd from sinning, yet
 the Blessed God will be utterly restrain'd
 from punishing: And is this a Doctrine fit
 to be believed by Christians, or to be taught
 by those who have no Commission for it
 from their Bible? Or indeed, will the Light
 of Nature and Reason ever justify and sup-
 port this sort of Pleading?

Objection the sixth is drawn from the *Wis-*
dom of God in his Government of the World.
 Surely, will the Sinner say, it was for some
 valuable End that God at first pronounced
 Punishment to attend the Sins of his Crea-
 tures,

tures; for he does not afflict willingly, nor delight to grieve the Children of Men: His Design must be therefore one of these two things; either to correct and reform the Sinners whom he punishes, and reduce them to their Duty, in order to partake of his Mercy, or else it must be to maintain a publick Monument and Demonstration of his Justice, and to support the Authority of his Law, and Honour of his Government, that he might deter other Creatures from sinning against him: But when this World is come to its Period, and his governing Providence over it is finished, and all the Means of Grace are ended, the first End, (*viz.*) *Correction and Reformation* ceases: There is no more hope of reforming such Sinners as these. And what further need can there be of the secondary Design of Punishment, (*viz.*) the *Demonstration of his Justice* in so terrible a manner to restrain others from sinning, when the State of our Trial is ended, and all Mankind are sent either to Heaven or Hell?

Answ. 1. I might here reply, by way of *Concession*, that if there were no other intelligent Creatures to be Witnesses of these eternal Demonstrations of God's Holiness, his Justice and his Hatred of Sin; and if God himself was the only Being who knew of these eternal Punishments, I acknowledge I cannot see sufficient Reason for this end-
less.

DISC. less Duration of them; I cannot give any
XIII. probable Account why Creatures, who are
 never to be corrected and reformed, should
 be tormented for ever in Secret; God perfectly
 knows his own Holiness and Justice without
 such Monuments of it; and since he has asserted
 this Punishment, I think there must be some
 Creatures to receive a moral Influence from the
 Knowledge of it.

I answer 2dly, When there is a Representation
 made of the Punishment of the Worshippers of
 the Beast in *Rev. xiv. 10, 11.* that *they shall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God which is poured out without Mixture, and they shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone, and the Smoak of their Torment ascendeth for ever and ever, it is in the Presence of the holy Angels as well as in the Presence of the Lamb.* Angels and other innocent Beings may improve such a Sight to valuable Purposes.

Objection the seventh. When we remember that *Jesus Christ* himself hath assured us that *but few shall be saved*, and that the broad Way is full of Sinners running down to Destruction and Death; if we suppose these Punishments to be endless, some will be ready to say, What! shall the greatest part of God's Creatures be made miserable for ever and ever? Is this consistent with the Wisdom and Goodness of the Blessed God, to form such an immense Multitude

of

of Souls dwelling in Bodies, to make them for ever miserable? What will a God of Goodness have to prove his Goodness to his Creatures, if far the greatest Part of them are left in everlasting Sorrows?

Ans. The far greatest Part of the Creation of God may be holy and happy still: For this World of ours, even all Mankind, is a very small Portion of God's immense Dominions; and when the Transactions of our Earth, and God's present Government of it shall be finished, he has a thousand other Dominions among the Planets and Stars, which has been proved by the Reason of Men to a great Degree of Probability; and these he governs by righteous Laws; and tho' he has not revealed much of them to us in this Life, yet he has discover'd something of this kind in his own Word: He has acquainted us with his wise and righteous Government over *fallen Angels*, and what was their Sin, (*viz.*) their Pride and Ambition, and what was their Punishment for their first Rebellion, *Jud. vi.* and this is done by the Wisdom and Mercy of God to affright *Men* from sinning, while we behold how those fallen Spirits are exposed and set forth as terrible Examples for our Warning. And why may not the everlasting Punishment of Sinners among the Children of *Men* be made a standing Monument of God's Justice, to deter many other *Worlds* from offending him?

DISC. Other Worlds, I say, of unknown Creatures, which perhaps may inhabit the planetary.
 XIII. Globes rolling round the same Sun as our Earth does; and their State of Trial perhaps is not yet begun, or it may be half run out, and yet shall not be finish'd for some thousands of Years?

Or perhaps there are other Worlds of Spirits, and invifible, incorporeal, intelligent Creatures in a State of Trial, may perfevere in glorious Innocence and complete Happinefs, to the eternal Praise of their Maker's Goodnefs, and may yet be kept in their constant Duty and Obedience, by having always in their View the eternal Punifhments of wicked *Men*. See this Subject treated of more at large in a Book called, *The Strength and Weaknefs of human Reason*, fecond Edition, pag. 288.

The Counfels of God are far above our Reach, and his Dominions and Governments are unknown to us. What if the Great God will have Creatures in fome of his Territories, who in themfelves are weak and ready to fall, and may be deterr'd from Sin and Apoftacy by fuch ftanding Manifeftrations of his Hatred of it, and his righteous Vengeance againft it? And fince others have been Monuments of Warning to us, what if he pleafe to make this wicked World of ours, when he has taken the few Righteous out of it to Heaven; I fay, what if he pleafe

to

to make the rest an everlasting Spectacle of DISC.
his Justice and Holiness to a hundred or a XIII.
thousand other Worlds, which may be ut-
terly unknown to us? And he may, for
this end, reveal his Transactions with Man-
kind to those Worlds, tho' he has not re-
vealed much of their Affairs to us.

If I were to mention any other *Objection*
worthy of Notice, I know of none but this,
viz. some learned Men suppose it to have been
the Opinion of the primitive Fathers, that
Souls departing from this World were sent
into *Hades*, or the State of the Dead, where
the Righteous rested in a State of Peace and
Hope till the Resurrection should bring them
to Heaven: And the most wicked amongst
Mankind went also to *Hades*, or this State
of the Dead, under a long and fearful Ex-
pectation of the final Punishments of Hell:
But that great Multitudes who were of an
indifferent Character, and who were not so
bad but they might be reclaimed, had an-
other State of Trial in *Hades*, whither, they
say, our Lord *Jesus Christ* at his Death de-
scended and preached the Gospel to them,
and many of them were recovered, and shall
be hereafter raised to eternal Life. The
chief Scripture whence they borrow this is
1 *Pet.* iii. 19, 20. of which we have spoken
before; and that at the great Day of Judg-
ment the incorrigible Sinners should be sent
with the Devils into the Punishment of Fire,
X 2 which,

DISC. which, though it may last for a shorter or
 XIII. longer time, yet should destroy both their
 Bodies and their Souls for ever.

To this I *answer* first, If this had been the Doctrine of many ancient *Christians*, yet unless they could bring plainer Proofs of it from the Word of God than one difficult and obscure Text of *St. Peter*, there is no great reason for us to receive from them such Traditions. The Word of God is our only Test of Truth, and our Instructor in Matters of the invisible World.

Ans. 2dly, Though there might be a few of the early Writers who seem'd to incline to some of these Opinions; yet this Sense is drawn out from most of them by learned Men with much Difficulty, Uncertainty and Conjecture: And there are many others of them who make the Punishments of Hell as durable as the Writers of later Ages: Nor do they mention or allow of any such sort of *Purgatory* for Souls of an indifferent Character as this Objection pretends. Those who will look into their Writings will find abundant Evidence, that most of them talk of *eternal Punishment by Fire* in the very Words and Language of the New Testament, and in direct Opposition to this Doctrine of temporal Punishments in Hell. I shall cite but two Writers, one of which is the very earliest of the Fathers, an Acquaintance of *St. Paul*, and that is *Clemens* the

the Roman, who in the eighth Section of his **DISC.**
Second Epistle says thus; **XIII.**

Let us therefore repent whilst we are yet upon the Earth: For we are as Clay in the Hand of the Artificer. For as the Potter, if he make a Vessel, and it be distorted in his Hands, or broken, again forms it a-new; but if he hath gone so far as to throw it into the Furnace of Fire, he can no more bring any Remedy to it: So we, whilst we are in this World, should repent with our whole Heart for whatsoever Evil we have done in the Flesh, while we have yet the Time of Repentance, that we may be saved by the Lord. For after we shall have departed out of this World, we shall no longer be able either to confess our Sins, or repent in the other. The English Reader may find this in Archbishop Wakes's Translation of the most primitive Fathers.

Justin Martyr, who is also one of the most early Writers, in the eighth Section of his first Apology, tells us, that Plato teaches that Rhadamanthus and Minos punished the Unrighteous who came before them; and that we Christians say the same thing will be done, but 'tis by Christ; when their Bodies are joined with their Souls, and they shall be punished with eternal Punishment, and not for the Period of a thousand Years only, as Plato said. This same Writer also, in very many Places of his Works, talks of eternal Punishment, and of Punishment for an endless

Irenæus also after him, as well as *Ignatius* and *Polycarp* before him, speak of this *Fire* which is not to be quenched, and of *Death* and *Punishment*, not temporal, but eternal. So that it is really an Imposition upon unlearned Readers to pretend, that the Doctrine which denies the Eternity of the Punishments of Hell, was the common Sense of the primitive Fathers, tho' it is granted that *Origen* and some others might be of this Opinion.

To conclude; Since the Word of God has expressly assured us, that these Punishments of sinful Men shall be eternal, it is not for us to hearken to any other Doctrines, and neglect what God has said, nor is it fit for us to dispute the Wisdom and Justice of divine Conduct, nor to impeach his Goodness. *Let God be true, though every Man be a Liar*; let God be wise tho' every Man be a Fool; let God be just and righteous in all his Ways, though Man vainly murmur against him, and raise these noisy and feeble Remonstrances against his Judgments. *The Counsel of the Lord shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure* in the eternal Manifestations of his Justice as well as his Grace. If there be any supposed Inconsistency or Cloud of Difficulty remaining on his Conduct, he will clear it up to the Satisfaction of every rational

rational Mind one Day, and will bring the **DISC.**
 Conscience of every condemned Sinner to **XIII**
 acknowledge the Equity of his Proceedings:
 The whole Creation shall then justify the
 final Sentence of Judgment on all the Sons
 of Men.

I cannot finish this awful Argument better than the Apostle finishes the same sort of Subject in the ninth and eleventh Chapters to the Romans. O Man, who art thou that repliest against God? What if God, willing to shew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, hath endured with much Long-suffering the Vessels of Wrath who have fitted themselves for Destruction? And that he might make known the Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto Glory? O the Depths of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge, the Justice and the Goodness of God, how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out? For of him, and thro' him, and to him, are all things, to whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION III.

Reflexions on the Eternity of Punishment in Hell.

As we have before drawn various *Inferences* from the *Nature* of those Punishments

DISC. that are prepar'd for Sinners in the World
 XIII to come, so there are other *Inferences* and
 terrible *Reflections* which may be derived
 from the *Duration* or *Perpetuity* of the
 Torments of Hell.

Reflect. I. *What unspeakable Anguish and Torture doth this one Circumstance add to every Pain and Sorrow of damped Creatures, that it is everlasting and has no End? What unknown Twinges in the Conscience doth this Thought give to the Gnawing of the cruel Worm, (viz.) that 'tis a Worm that never dies? What unconceivable Force and Sting of Torment does this add to the Fire of God's Indignation in Hell, that it is a Fire which shall never be quenched? When one Year of Torment and Sorrow is ended, or one thousand Years are come to their Period, the Case of Sinners is still much the same, the Vengeance remains still as heavy as ever, and seems as far off from its End. This dreadful Price, which the Justice of God demands for the Reparation of our Offences against his Law and his Authority, is a Price which Creatures can never pay, for it is infinite; and therefore when a finite Creature begins to make Payment thereof with his own Sufferings, these Sufferings must be everlasting.*

It is evident, that one wilful Sin is sufficient to sink Creatures under the Indignation of a God for six thousand Years: I
 call

call the Angels who sinned for Witnesses to **DISC.**
this Truth: They were formed in Holiness **XIII.**
and in Glory before the Creation of this
lower World, and probably they sinned and
fell before this Creation too, and they are
yet imprison'd and confined under perpetual
Chains of Darkness, as the Word of God
tells us, and reserved to everlasting Punish-
ment at the Judgment of the great Day.
And if thou, O Sinner, among the Sons of
Men, if thou diest in an unregenerate, un-
holy and unpardon'd State, the Sins of thy
whole Life are charged upon thee, and thou
art daily treasuring up Wrath against the
Day of Wrath, and thou shalt not escape
from this Prison till thou hast paid the utmost
Farthing. Rom. ii. 5. Matt. v. 26.

If one Sin deserves all this Misery which
has been described, what a dreadful Reckon-
ing will the Sins of thy whole Life come
to, when every Command of God which
thou hast broken shall appear and demand
Reparation for its injured Honour? Re-
member, O Sinner, obstinate and rebellious,
remember thou hast to do with a great and
dreadful God, who has all thine Iniquities
ever before his Eyes, Esai. lvi. 5. Behold
they are written before me, and I will re-
compense, saith the Lord, their Iniquity into
their Bosom. He is a God that will never
forget any one of thy Crimes. Amos viii. 7.
The Lord hath sworn by the Excellency of
Jacob,

DISC. *Jacob, surely I will never forget any of their*
XIII. *Works. Though thou hast lost and forgot*
 them, he will bring them again into thy
 Conscience with a terrible Remembrance;
 and when this God comes forth in a way of
 Vengeance, every Transgression and Disobe-
 dience shall receive a just Recompence of Re-
 ward. Vengeance belongeth unto me, saith
 the Lord, Heb. ii. 2. and x. 30. He that
 spared not his own Son, when he laid on him
 the Iniquity of us all, will never spare thee
 who art the personal and criminal Transgres-
 sor. Eternal Recompences are due to the
 Demands of Justice, and he will punish till
 full Payment is made, equal to the Evil of
 Sin, i. e. to all everlasting.

Reflect. II. *What infinite and eternal Con-
 cerns of Men hang upon the short and slender
 Thread of human Life?* An eternal Heaven
 or an eternal Hell depend on our good or
 ill Behaviour in this short and mortal State.
 While Life remains the Sinner's Hope re-
 mains, he abides on the Stage of Action,
 and this is the State of Trial for Eternity;
 But as soon as the Thread of Life is broken,
 immediately ensues endless Joy or endless
 Sorrow.

What a poor fleeting Vapour, what a
 thin and frail Bubble is this feeble and un-
 certain Thing which we call *Life*? And
 yet what Matters of immense Importance
 depend upon it? This present Life is a Prize
 put

put into our Hands, for 'tis the only Time DISC.
 given us to obtain Deliverance and Escape XIII.
 from eternal Death: Life in this View, as
 mere a Bubble and Vapour as it is, carries
 in it something of infinite and everlasting
 Moment: But alas, how wretchedly does
 foolish and sinful Mankind trifle and squander
 it away amidst a thousand Vanities and Im-
 pertinencies, or saunter it out in Sloth and
 Laziness, with an utter disregard of the im-
 portant Eternity that depends upon it? What
 Multitudes are there that waste the golden
 Hours of Grace, and the Seasons of Hope,
 in procuring to themselves, by their own
 wilful Iniquities, a Length of Damnation
 and everlasting Despair?

While we dwell here in the midst of the
 Means of Mercy and Salvation, there is hope
 that our sinful Souls may be healed of that
 Disease which is breeding the ever-gnawing
 Worm within us. We may prevent the
 Fuel of divine Wrath from kindling into a
 Flame which cannot be quenched: But
 when once the Clock of Life has gone thro'
 its appointed Spaces, and the last Hour
 strikes, whether it be three or five, whether
 at twelve at Noon or at Midnight, all Hope
 is for ever gone; we are plunged into the
 Regions of Death, Despondency and Dark-
 ness, and nothing remains but the actual
 Torture of the *Worm* of Conscience to seize
 on us, and the *Fire* of divine Anger actual-
 ly.

DISC. ly breaks out, which shall burn to the lowest

III.
Hell.

O could we but behold ourselves in the Glass of Wisdom, while we are yet standing upon the slippery Edge of this burning Precipice, and playing with painted Bubbles there, or in warm Pursuit of a flying shining Feather along the Brink of this burning Torrent, what Fools and Madmen should we appear to be even in our own Eyes! And yet we go on to practise this Folly, this Madness, Day after Day, in spite of all the Warnings of God and Man, till at last our Foot slips in some dreadful Moment, and we vanish out of the Sight of our Companions, and are lost for ever.

Reflect. III. If the Miseries of Hell are eternal, *how unreasonable a thing is it ever to suffer the Loss of any Possessions or Joys which are temporal and perishing, to come into Competition with them?* Surely there is nothing that belongs to Time that should tempt us to run the Risque of the Sorrows of Eternity, nor allure us to commit one Sin against God, which is the fatal Spring of such Sorrows! Stand still, O Sinner, and hearken to the Voice of Wisdom. Do the Pleasures of Sense, or the Gaieties of Sight, or the Wealth or Grandeurs of this Life allure thee to make thy Way boldly thro' any *Means* toward the Possession of them, think with thyself, is it by offending
this

this Great and Dreadful God? And wilt thou dare to take one Step towards these dangerous and deceitful Vanities, and risque thine immortal Welfare in the Pursuit? What a foolish Bargain wilt thou make to gain the whole World of short-liv'd perishing Trifles, and to lose thy Soul in endless Perdition? *Mark viii. 36.* Dare any of us venture an eternal State of Torment to gain the flattering and delusive Joy of a short Hour, or a Winter's Day?

What are all the Gratifications of Flesh and Sense? What are all the swelling Titles of Honour amongst Men? What are all the Treasures of this perishing World? How short is their Duration, and how short is thy Possession of them? All earthly Felicities *perish in the using*, and are no sooner enjoy'd but are quickly lost again, or expire in the Enjoyment: But if the Ruin of a Soul, and a lost Heaven, be the Price of them, how mad is the Purchase, and how wretched is the Purchaser?

Reflect. IV. *How patiently should we bear all the Labours and Fatigues, the Pains and Miseries of this mortal Life, when we have any hope of our Deliverance from the Pains and Sorrows of Immortality?* As for our Maladies and Sorrows here on Earth, blessed be God they are not eternal: There are some Intervals to relieve, and there is some Period to finish them. When we ask a

Friend

DISC.

XIII.

Friend who is sick and in Pain, *How fare you?* I'm in Pain now, says he, but I hope
 "I shall be easy anon: I am sick to-day,
 "but I trust I shall be in Health to-morrow."

This is a sweet Mitigation of the present Uneasiness, and gives Relief to the Patient. But how dreadful and piercing would these Accents be, if we should hear our Friend make this Answer to us, "I am all over in
 "extreme Pain and Anguish, and I shall
 "never, never be eased of it: I lie under
 "exquisite Torment of the Flesh, and Horror in my Soul, and I shall for ever feel
 "this Horror and this Torment." Such is the Case of the damned Sinners in Hell, and therefore their Agonies are intolerable.

But if you have any comfortable Prospect of the Pardon of Sin, and a well-grounded Hope of eternal Salvation thro' the Blood of *Christ*, and by the Rules and Promises of the Gospel, all the temporal Toils and Plagues that can possibly stand between us and Heaven should be despised and disregarded by us, and we should learn to triumph over them with the victorious Songs of Thankfulness and Praise. Blessed be the Name of our God, *tho' he has smitten us sorely, yet he has not given us over to everlasting Death.*

Let our Thoughts ascend to the heavenly Regions, and let us ask those who are arrived thither out of the Land of Temptation

tion and Conflict, out of these Tabernacles of Sin and Sorrow; let us ask them, what gave them so divine a Courage and so firm a Patience in the midst of all their Trials? With one Voice they will all make Answer, 'Twas the View of our Deliverance from an eternal Hell, and the Hopes of obtaining Salvation by *Christ Jesus* with eternal Glory; 'tis this that supported us under every Burden, and bore us on with a Spirit of Faith and Victory thro' every Hardship on Earth. 'Twas for this we labour'd, and suffer'd, and counted not *Life*, nor any of the Blessings of it *dear to us*, nor any of the Sorrows of it intolerable, that we might escape the everlasting Sorrows of a future State, and enjoy the Blessings of Life eternal. And, O may every one of us *be the Followers of those who thro' this Faith and Patience have obtain'd the promised Felicity!* May we also make our Way, by the same Motives, thro' the Floods and the Fires of Affliction and Distress, to reach this everlasting Heaven, and to escape everlasting Burnings!

In order to confirm our Patience, and to animate our Zeal, let us survey the blessed Example of *St. Paul*, who was reproached, who was buffeted, who was persecuted with Stones, and Whips, and Scourages, and bore a thousand Indignities, who was assaulted with endless Strokes of Injury and Violence, and yet rejoiced in the midst of all his Sufferings

DISC. *surings in the View of his eternal Hope.*

KH. *The Spirit of Faith in the midst of all his*
Sufferings taught him to sing this divine
Song, Our light Afflictions, which are but
for a Moment, are working for us a far
more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.
The Sufferings of this present Time are not
worthy to be compared with the Glory that
shall be revealed, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Rom. viii.
18. Nor are they worthy to be compar'd
with that exceeding and eternal Weight of
Vengeance, from which we are deliver'd by
Faith and patient Obedience to the Gospel
of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflect. V. If the Miseries of Hell are
eternal, we can never have our Deliverance
from them made too secure. If the Danger of
any Mischief, to which we might be ex-
posed, were but slight, and the Duration of
it short, there might be possibly some Ex-
cuse for our Delay to escape it: But when
it is total and irrevokable Ruin to which we
are liable every Moment while we continue
in a State of Sin, we should fly with all the
Wings of our Souls, and never be at ease
or quiet till we are got without the Reach
of Danger, and settled in a Place of Safety,
or on the Rock of our Salvation.

O could we but perceive a thousandth
Part of the Horror that is contain'd in an
eternal Hell, an eternal Banishment from
the Face and Favour of God, and the eter-
nal

nal Impressions of his Anger, we should never give ourselves Rest one Moment, till we had returned to God by a sincere Repentance, and were reconciled to him that made us; till we fled for Refuge to the Blood of *Jesus*, and to his sanctifying Grace, which is the only Hope that is set before us. We should never give ourselves leave to lie down, or awake in quiet, while we were destitute of a saving Interest in the Salvation of *Christ*, and had attained to some clear Evidence of it, and a well-grounded Hope.

Have we not sometimes felt the *Worm of Conscience* begin to gnaw within us, and to prey upon our Spirits after the Commission of some Sin? And shall we not apply ourselves with all holy Speed to the divine Physician who can kill this gnawing Worm within us, and can heal those sinful Maladies that are breeding it? Have we not sometimes felt the Threatnings of the Wrath of God in his Law, like a *Fire* in our Bones? With what infinite Desire then, and what restless Vehemence should we fly to the Blood of *Jesus* our great Sacrifice, which alone can quench the fiery Indignation of God, and prevent it from growing up to an everlasting Flame?

Had we upon our Spirits such a Sense of the Terrors of the Lord in Hell, as his

DISC. Threatnings represent, we should never be
 XIII. satisfy'd with such cold doubtful Hopes of
 our Deliverance from them, as thousands of
 nominal Christians are contented with; but
 we should make every needful and critical
 Enquiry, whether our Repentance were sin-
 cere, whether our Faith in *Christ* were un-
 feigned, whether our Hopes had a solid
 Foundation in the divine Promise: We
 should search every Power of our Souls, and
 examine our Hearts through every Corner,
 whether Sin be mortify'd there, whether the
 christian Virtues are formed within us, and
 the divine Image is begun to be stamp'd upon
 our Minds: We should be restless and im-
 patient in our inward Searches, whether we
 are made new Creatures, whether we are
 born of God and become his Children, and
 are secur'd by his Gospel from this everlast-
 ing Vengeance. The Degree and the infi-
 nite Duration of this Misery should appoint
 the Proportion of our Zeal and Solitude to
 escape it.

A Man who sees or feels his own House
 on Fire under him, does not continue upon
 his Bed of Sloth, or sit amusing himself
 among the Ornaments of his Chamber, till
 the Flames have broke thro' and seized him:
 But with huge Outcries he seeks for Help,
 and flies in haste for his Life wheresoever he
 finds a Way. Such should be the Lan-
 guage,

guage, and such the Activity of sinful Creatures, to escape the Wrath to come; and such will be the Outcries of Sinners when they are thorowly awaken'd: This Language of every Place, and of every Hour will then be awaken'd, *What shall I do to be saved? Whither shall I fly for Refuge?* O blessed *Jesus*, receive me into thy Protection, and be thou my Deliverer.

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Give me leave to repeat this sort of Expostulation with lingering and delaying Sinners, or with drowzy and formal Christians. If you would set yourselves often in the Blaze of these everlasting Burnings, you would never satisfy yourselves with such cold faint Wishes, such lazy Endeavours, such languid Efforts of Faith and Repentance to escape this fiery Indignation that shall never be quenched: Nor would you content yourselves with dark and doubtful Evidences of your Interest in the Love of God, and the Grace of our Lord *Jesus*; but you would be Day and Night busy with your own Hearts in the most intimate and careful Search after converting Grace and living Christianity: You would never be at rest till you felt the new Nature working with Power and bright Evidence within you, that you might be able to say, "We know there
" is no Condemnation belongs to us, but
" that we are passed from Death unto Life."

DISC. Let us proceed upon this Subject, turning
 XIII. the Discourse from ourselves to our Friends,
 and say, With what Fervour of Love, with
 what holy Zeal and Compassion should we
 labour to save our Friends and all that are
 dear to us from this eternal Destruction? What Words of fiery Terror shall we chuse to awaken those who slumber on the Edge of endless Burnings? What Language of kind and tender Passion shall we chuse to reach their Hearts? What Phrases of melting Pity to hasten their Escape from this Precipice of burning Ruin, or to pluck them as Brands out of the Fire before it becomes unquenchable? *Knowing these Terrors of the Lord,* with what Vehemence of Zeal should we try to *persuade* Men, our Fellow-Mortals, that they would not venture into the midst of these Miseries, and beseech them in the Name of *Christ* to be reconciled to God? This was the Practice, and these the Motives of the great Apostle, as he describes them at the latter End of the fifth Chapter in his second Epistle to the *Corinthians*.

O with what Force of ardent and active Compassion should Ministers preach both the Curses of the Law, and the Grace of the blessed Gospel, to perishing Sinners, and make haste to rescue their Souls from this everlasting Vengeance? With what warm and solicitous Zeal should they lay hold of those

those poor thoughtless Wretches who are madly indulging their Lusts and Follies, and thereby preparing themselves to become fit Fuel for this eternal Fire? They are forming themselves by their Iniquities to become Vessels of this everlasting Indignation: Let us seize them by some kind and constraining Words of Love, some Outcries of Compassion and Fear, lest they rush into those Flames which will never be quenched: Perhaps when they are summoned away from us by the Stroke of Death, they may leave us in most uncomfortable Sorrows for our Neglect, while they are suffering the long endless Punishment due to their own Iniquities.

Reflect. VI. *How unreasonable a thing is it for us Ministers, who are charged and intrusted with the whole Counsel of God for the Salvation of Men, to avoid the Mention of these his eternal Terrors in our Sermons, and in our Addresses to mortal Creatures; Creatures who are daily preparing themselves for them by their Sins, and are ready to plunge into the midst of them! Has not our blessed Saviour made frequent Mention of them in his Gospel, and set them in their dreadful Array before his Hearers? Has he not expressed them in their strongest Terms, and spread them in their most frightful Colours, and set them in their full and everlasting Ex-*

DISC, tent, before the Sinners which attended his
 XIII. Ministry? And did he ever give any Hint
 that they should be understood in a milder
 Sense? Have not the Apostles followed
 their Lord in the same dreadful Display of
 the sharp and ever-during Punishments of
 Hell? And have they taught us to qualify
 these Terrors by gentler Interpretations of
 them? And have not such kind of Dis-
 courses been abundantly blessed in the Pro-
 vidence of God, both in ancient and later
 Ages, to awaken and save Multitudes of the
 Souls of Men?

How many holy and happy Spirits are
 now rejoicing before God, and before the
 Throne of his Love, and encompassed with
 all the Joys of Immortality, who owe the
 Beginnings of their Repentance, and the
 first Turn of their Souls towards Faith and
 Salvation to such Words of Terror as these?
 How many of the Saints on high have been
 first awaken'd from their deadly Sleep in
 Sin by the Ministrations of this eternal Ven-
 geance of God? How many have been
 frighted out of their Indolence at first by the
 Discovery of these everlasting Horrors of
 Conscience and Agonies of Soul? The
 Dread of the Worm that never dies has
 affrighted their Consciences from a Course
 of Sin: The fiery Indignation which shall
 never be quenched has flashed in their Bo-
 soms

forms from the Lips of the Preacher, and DISC.
has set them all over trembling, and filled XIII.
all their inward Powers with Dismay and
Anguish: Their Tongue has broke into
loud and earnest Enquiries, *Who shall deliver
me from this eternal Death? How shall I
escape this everlasting Wrath to come?* And
the Spirit of God by degrees has led them
to *Jesus*, and his atoning Blood, his Gospel,
his Righteousness and his converting Grace,
as the only way of Deliverance and Sal-
vation.

How unreasonable a thing is it for Mi-
nisters in their Preaching to soften these
Terrors of the Lord, to cut short these end-
less Horrors and Anguish, and to mitigate
the Miseries of Hell and Damnation, since
even all that Length and Eternity in which
Christ and his Apostles preached these Ter-
rors, have not been sufficient to reclaim
Mankind from their Iniquities; but Multi-
tudes of them, in the Face of all these
Threatnings, still persist in the broad Way
to Destruction and Death?

Can we possibly do any Honour to the
Ministry of our blessed Lord, or is there any
real Service done to the Souls of Men by
our fond and vain Reasonings to shorten
these Sorrows, and put a Period to these
threatned Torments? Will the blessed *Je-
sus*, when he sits on the Throne of Judg-
ment,

DISC. ment, give us Thanks for running counter
 XIII. to the Language of his own Ministry, and
 for daring to contradict his denounced Ven-
 geance?

By the various Expressions and Representations of this Matter in Scripture, in such solemn and dreadful Language, must I not suppose that the Blessed God, and our Lord *Jesus Christ*, design'd and intended that Mankind should believe the Pains and Punishments of Hell will be eternal? Can I then be censured for endeavouring to establish and promote the awful Doctrine which both God the Father and his Son intended should be believed, and by which they design'd to guard both the Law and the Gospel? A Doctrine which was left on Record to deter Sinners from the Paths of Sin and Destruction, and to awaken the Souls and Consciences of Men to Repentance? On the other hand, can those Teachers be approved of God or good Men, whose evident Design is to lead the World to disbelieve this solemn and terrible Warning of the Great God?

Let us proceed in these Enquiries, and address ourselves to those wicked and miserable Creatures, who are actually suffering this divine Vengeance. Let us ask them, how they approve of this sort of Preaching which withholds from the Eyes, and Ears, and Consciences of Men, the most dreadful Circum-

Circumstance of these Horrors? Will any of the damned Wretches of Hell thank us for hiding so dreadful a Part of these Miseries from them? Will they bless us for lessening the threatned Curses and Indignation of a God? "No, says the condemned Wretch, "Those Preachers are worthy of my Curses" and not my Thanks, who abated these "Terrors of the Lord, and shorten'd his "threatned Punishment; for they persuad- "ed me to hope there would be an End of "my Misery, and thereby tempted me to "venture upon those Sins which I should "have renounced with Abomination, had "I believed the Words of God, and these "everlasting Torments. O cursed and cruel "Preachers, who by softning and curtailing "the Sentence of eternal Misery, gave a "sort of Licence to my Wickedness, and "broke one of the strongest Bars that re- "strain'd me from sinning! 'Tis by this "sort of Flattery they paved my Way down "to Hell, and have brought me into this "Prison, this eternal Anguish, whence there "is no Release *."

Say,

* Some of the Ancients have called those Preachers, who shorten the Pains of Hell, the *merciful* or *compassionate* Doctors: And Dr. T. Burnet calls those *merciless* or *uncompassionate*, who preach the Eternity of it: But I think it will appear one Day, that those are truly the *compassionate* Writers and Teachers who most effectually affright and prevent Men from Sin and Damnation; and those who have given wicked Men hope

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DISC. Say, ye who preach that the Gates of
 XIII. Hell shall one Day be open'd to let out the
 Prisoners, ye who tell Sinners there is a
 Time of Release for them, say, Do ye expect to fright them out of their Sins by lessening their Fear of God and his Wrath to come? Do ye hope to bring obstinate and impenitent Rebels to a more speedy Remorse for Sin, and to begin a Life of Holiness, by persuading them that these Terrors of God shall have an End? Can ye imagine that such vain Tidings, such soothing Flattery will ever melt them to Repentance and Love, when all the Grace of the Gospel mingled with the Blood and Tears of the Son of God will not do it? Would not this manner of Preaching rather encourage them to run on still in their Rebellions, and make them more regardless of their highest Interest? Would it not tempt them to give a loose to their vilest Inclinations, and all the flagrant and abominable Enormities of their own Heart, when they shall be told that these Punishments, which the Bible calls *everlasting*, shall one Day come to an End?

Besides, I believe it has been observed in every Age, that the Fears of this *Worm which never dies*, and this eternal *Fire which shall never*

hope of their Release from Hell, will be in danger of being charged with smoothing their Way to this Misery, by softening the Terrors of it.

never be quenched, have been made abundantly useful in the Providence of God to lay a powerful Restraint on the unruly Vices of some Sinners, who have never been awaken'd and drawn into saving Penitence, or reclaim'd to a Life of sincere Holiness. And if the Restraint of this Terror were taken away, how much more would all Iniquity abound among those who have no inward Principle of Goodness?

Let us proceed then to preach the same Terror which the blessed *Jesus* thought not unworthy of his Ministry; and may the Providence and the Grace of God give Success to our Labours, both for the restraining the extravagant Vices of the Wicked, for the saving Conversion of many Sinners, and for a Guard and Restraint to the young and wavering Christians *.

Not-

* The late Dr. *Thomas Burnet*, in his *Latin Treatise of the State of the Dead, and those who rise again*, opposes the Doctrine of the Eternity of future Punishments, and shews who of the ancient Fathers seem to be of the same Opinion with him: But he tells us, that these ancient Fathers, when they treated of this Subject, often gave the same Advice to others, which he himself gives in these Words. "Whatsoever you determine within yourself, and in your own Breast, concerning these Punishments, whether they are eternal or no, yet you ought to use the common Doctrine and the common Language when you preach or speak to the People, especially those of the lower Rank, who are ready to run headlong into Vice, and are to be restrain'd from Evil only by the Fear of Punishment: And even among good Christians, there are Infants to be nourished with Milk; nor is their Diet to be rashly changed, lest thro' Intemperance they fall into Diseases."

And

DISC. Notwithstanding all the express Language
XIII. of Scripture on our Side of the Question,
 and all our Arguments drawn from it; yet
 there are some of the Reasoners and the Dis-
 puters of this World, who will still suppose
 that 'tis more for the Honour of God, and
 for the Glory of our blessed Saviour, for
 Ministers to dwell always upon the Promises
 of the new Covenant, and the Riches of
 the Grace of *Christ*, and the Overflowing
 Measures of the Love of God, in order to
 save sinful Men. "Surely, say they, Preach-
 "ers have tried long enough what the Words
 "of Terror will do; let us now allure sin-
 "ful Men to be reconciled to God by a Mi-
 "nisty of universal Love and Grace; and
 "let us see whether the boundless Compas-
 "sions of a God, in putting a final Period
 "to the Miseries of his guilty Creatures af-
 "ter a certain Number of Years, will not
 "draw Sinners with a sweeter Violence to
 "the Love and Obedience of their Maker,
 "than all this Doctrine of Severity and
 "Terror."

In

And he adds in the Margin, "Whosoever shall translate
 "these Sentiments into our Mother Tongue, I shall think
 "it was done with an evil Design and to bad Purpose."
 So that if this were a true Doctrine, yet the learned Author
 agrees, that neither the holy Writers of the Bible, nor the
 Fathers, think it proper that the Bulk of the People should
 know it. But if it should not be translated, I would ask,
 why did the Author write it and leave it to be published?
 Did he suppose all Men and Boys, who understood *Latin*, to be
 sufficiently guarded against the Abuse of such an Opinion?

In the first Place I *answer*, that surely **DISC.**
Jesus himself, who is the prime Minister of **XIII.**
his Father's Kingdom, and the divinest Mes-
senger of his Love, knew better than we do
how to pay the highest Honour to his hea-
venly Father, and to display his own Grace.
Surely he was well acquainted with the best
Way to begin with Sinners in order to their
Reconciliation to God, and knew also the
most effectual Avenues to the Consciences of
sinful Creatures, incomparably beyond what
any of us can pretend to. Had he not as
tender a Sense of the Honour of his Father's
Mercy, as warm a Zeal for the Glory of his
own Grace and Gospel, and as wise and
melting a Compassion for the Souls of Men
as the best of us can boast of? And yet he
thought it proper to lay the Foundation of
his own, and his Apostles Ministrations of
Grace, in this Language of Terror, in these
Threatnings of eternal Punishment. And
in the Course of his Providence throughout
all Ages he has, in some measure, made
this Doctrine successful to recover Souls from
the Snares of the Devil, and to enlarge his
own heavenly Kingdom.

But I *answer* further, It must be granted
that the Tempers of Men are various, and
'tis possible that some may be of so ingenu-
ous and refined a Disposition, that the Words
of Love and Grace, without any Terror,
might

DISC. might reach their Hearts, and thro' the Influences of Heaven, touch them effectually:

XIII. But as for the Bulk of Mankind, while they continue in their Sins, dally Experience convinceth us, that they are best awaken'd by the Terrors of the Lord, by a Representation of the gnawing *Worm which never dies*, and the *Fire which shall not be quenched*. I never knew but one Person in the whole Course of my Ministry who acknowledged, that the first Motions of Religion in their own Heart arose from a Sense of the Goodness of God, and that they were gently and sweetly led at first to this Enquiry, *What shall I render to the Lord who hath dealt so bountifully with me?* But I think all besides, who have come within my Notice, have rather been first awaken'd by the Passion of Fear to fly from the Wrath to come.

If therefore we will practise according to the Example of *Jesus*, the greatest and the wisest Prophet of his Church, and his holy Apostles, and the best of Preachers in all Ages who have followed him, if we would obey the Dictates of long Experience, and our best Observations on the Methods of converting Grace, I think we must proceed to denounce these eternal Terrors of the Lord against the Transgressors of his Law and the Despisers of his Gospel. This seems to be the appointed and most effectual Way
to

to rouse their Consciences to seek a Deliverance from the Curses of the Law, which carry in them everlasting Punishment. This appears to be the first Spring of Religion in sinful Men, and the first Motive to receive the glad Tidings of Salvation which are display'd in the New Testament. This spurs on their Passions to escape the Vengeance of God, by flying to his Gospel, where there is rich and abundant Grace to encourage the Hope of rebellious Creatures in their Returns to God by *Jesus Christ* the Saviour. To *Jesus*, who is the awful Messenger of his Father's Terrors, and the prime Minister of his Love, be Glory and Honour to everlasting Ages. *Amen.*

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P O S T S C R I P T.

WHEREAS it hath pleased God for these two Years past to cut me off from the delightful Work of my Study, and for the greatest Part of the Time to with-hold me from all publick Service in my Station by several Weaknesses of Nature ; and whereas I had many Writings lying by me which were quite finished and corrected for the Press, my Friends might naturally expect that those Pieces which were most nearly, or quite finished and revised, would first appear in the World, because it is much easier to correct three Sheets in a Week from the Press, than it is in as many Months to revise or to finish any imperfect Manuscript.

I think proper therefore here to acquaint them, that as fast as the Providence of God shall restore my Health and Strength, I shall endeavour to hasten the finishing of such as are yet imperfect : Some of which perhaps the Publick may more earnestly expect.

Stoke-Newington,
Feb. 21. 1743.

WHETHER I shall please God for this
two years past to cut me off from the
beneficial work of my study, and for the
greater part of the time to withhold me
from all public service in my station by
reason of the illness of my wife, and various
other circumstances lying by me which
were quite painful and corrected for the
public. Now I think I might naturally expect
that these papers would be most nearly
corrected and finished. I would not ap-
pear in the world, but it is much earlier
to correct these sheets in a week than the
first, and it is in many months to re-
vise or to finish any imperfect Manuscript.

I think proper therefore here to acquaint
them, that as fast as the Providence of God
shall restore my Health and Strength, I shall
endeavour to hasten the finishing of such as
are yet imperfect: Some of which perhaps
the Publick may more earnestly expect.

Edm. Burke
Feb. 21. 1744.

